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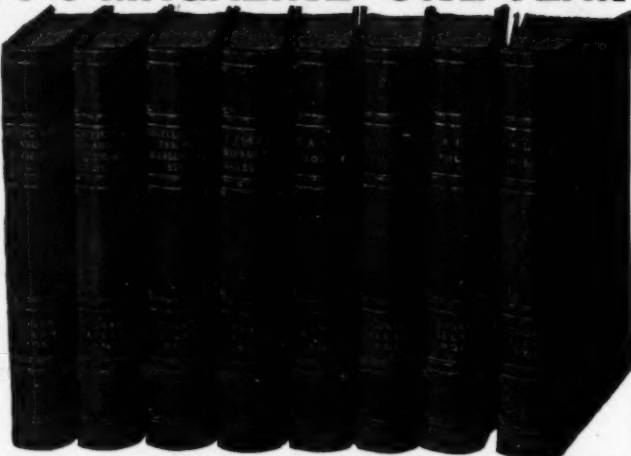
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LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

MAY, 1911



THE TUHARCZIN CASE

BY

EDITH MACVANE

Author of "The Duchess of Dreams," etc.

I.

LOVE at first sight is a phenomenon that we find often in books; sometimes even in real life. In any case, it was love at first sight that overcame Henry Livingston the first time he set eyes on the Comtesse Tuharczin.

It was the flip of the gold coin from his watch-chain, tossed at the cross-roads above the city, that took him to Aix-les-Bains; but it was the glimpse of her face, seen for an instant at the hotel window across the street from his own, that held him there. He sent word to his chauffeur that he would not go on till the next day, dressed himself with unusual care, and went over to the Casino.

All Aix was there, drinking tea and chatting with a determined gaiety. Beneath the flower-wreathed hats that thronged the terrace he sought long for the face that had so curiously moved him. When at last he found it, he beheld it bent downward in an odd reserve, and half concealed by a heavy mourning veil. But what eyes they were which, for the fleeting breath of a second, rested upon him as he passed!

She sat at a table drinking tea with two or three middle-aged ladies. An elderly maid stood behind her chair. In this stout and gray-haired company, her face appeared by contrast the more exquisitely fresh. But in spite of her youth she received from her companions a consideration that spoke of exalted rank. Livingston, fearful of bungling, seated himself at a table near-by and read his

New York *Herald* while he drank his tea. But his eyes roamed sideways. Who was she? What was she? And by what ingenuity or by what manœuvre could he attain an acquaintance that he began to desire in direct ratio to its obvious impossibility?

Livingston's mind, brooding on the aggravating hopelessness of the situation, was falling to despair when suddenly in the crowd he recognized the white mustache and tall, thin form of an old English friend of his father's.

"Sir Jasper, you remember me?"—which Sir Jasper, by great good luck, did. Mutual inquiries, followed by mutual compliments, succeeded. The pleasure was turned to a sudden startled joy in the young American's heart by the Englishman's next observation: "But now I must join my wife. You'll come with me? There she is, at the table yonder."

It was the table where sat the enchanting stranger. It was evident that Henry's eyes betrayed something of what he felt on the occasion, for Sir Jasper laughed in good-natured banter.

"Don't go scorching your wings there, my dear boy. She's a beauty, I grant you. But she's a man-hater, that little Comtesse Tuharczin."

"The Comtesse Tuharczin?" asked Henry eagerly. The older man laughed again.

"Yes; Rosalie Tuharczin. It seems, the late husband was aide-de-camp to the late king of Servia—killed with him, I think."

The next instant Henry found himself bowing to the fat and placid Lady Warrington; and then, by a stroke of good fortune that seemed like magic, making his salute directly to the face that had so bewitched him. She did not smile; but in the glance that rested for an instant in his it seemed to him that there was something at once wild and appealing, like that of a captive brought in suddenly from its forest. He had the sensation of meeting a being akin to himself, a soul which found in his, as he in it, a quality of secret sympathy unperceived by the rest of the world.

Play formed the topic of conversation. The English ladies, while adepts at bridge, joined in denouncing the evils of gambling at the public tables, here at the Casino. Then each confessed to have tried her luck a little—just a little. In answer to a question, the Comtesse Tuharczin shook her head.

"No," she said; "I never play, even the cards. My mother was very *dévoté*, and I have inherited her ideas."

Livingston ventured to propose a motor excursion to Chamounix, to include all the present company. But Sir Jasper, with his wife and four sisters-in-law, was leaving the next day for England. Henry turned timidly to the Comtesse Tuharczin. It seemed to him that

he could see a sardonic grin lifting the points of Sir Jasper's white mustache.

"I, monsieur? Thank you very much, but Madame Warrington will tell you I am in Aix only for the cure. I am going nowhere. Good-by, dear madame. Sir Warrington, *bon voyage!* And you, monsieur, au revoir."

In a sweep of black drapery, she was gone. A half-hour later, the Warringtons also departed. Henry Livingston was again left alone and companionless in the midst of the chattering crowd.

Daily, in the week that followed, he beheld the divinity that had so bewitched him. At the end of a week, though he had conversed with her on various topics, though he knew her to possess a mind well-instructed and keen, as well as ideas firmly fixed, if a trifle puritanical, he had come no nearer to touching her real personality than he had on the day of their introduction. Still, he was conscious of that secret sympathy, of that veiled flame of personality, which on their first acquaintance had so profoundly impressed him. The flame was there, but from him it was vigilantly guarded.

It was to Henry Livingston a shock of considerable magnitude to enter the Casino one evening a week after his arrival in Aix, and find the Comtesse Tuharczin playing *trente-et-quarante* at one of the public tables.

II.

So intent she was upon her game that she did not notice his presence. Her grim-faced maid stood behind her, holding her purse. To judge from the comments of those about the table, the purse was empty.

"Her last coin, poor child!"

These words were pronounced just at Henry's ear, as he beheld the absorbed woman with an eager movement of her gloved hand fling a louis on the Black. The Red won, and she turned with a gesture as of one who abandons the field. Her face presented a startling change from its usual pale frostiness; in each cheek was a glow of carnation, and her eyes shone with an intensity of excitement. These eyes, meeting Henry's, stared at him transfixed. The color faded from her cheeks, then surged up again. However severe had been the shock of Henry's disillusionment, this very obvious emotion at the sight of him produced a thrill of delightful excitement. He slipped around the crowded table and held out his hand.

"Good evening, Comtesse. You've had a run of bad luck, I see."

Her eyes stared at his in a strange intensity of distress, and he heard her take a little quick breath. Then slowly a little black-gloved hand came out to meet his own.

"Yes," she answered, speaking with difficulty; "I have had very bad luck. I came in only five minutes ago, to see what the game was like, and I lost my louis, as you saw." She stopped suddenly, with a gesture that spoke of nerves strained like the cords of a vessel's cable. Then she turned her eyes back upon the American, and spoke in a kind of desperation.

"No," she said; "that is not the truth. I've been here an hour, playing, and I've lost nearly ten thousand francs. That louis you saw me lose was my last coin. Now I am going home."

"Please don't!" he cried warmly, moved not so much by the exquisiteness of her beauty as by her distress. In her faultless severity she had seemed infinitely far away, but her human weakness brought her almost close. He hated, as one hates an obvious profanation, to see her at the gaudy glitter of this public gambling table; yet he hated worse to see her go away. "Please stay!" he begged. "Let me play for you this time, Comtesse."

In entering the room he had intended to play, and still held a five-hundred franc note in his hand. He gesticulated with it toward the table. "What color?" he asked briskly. "What number?"

The Comtesse gazed at Livingston in a kind of poignant irresolution; then answered slowly, as though forced by an inward desire that was stronger than her will:

"Monsieur, I will accept a louis as a loan till to-morrow. Very well, then—that double-louis, if you have no other."

With an odd gesture that spoke of fiercely restrained forces beneath, she held out her hand. Livingston dropped the coin into it, and she threw it on the number 21. Livingston smiled to himself. The white marble ball flew. It whirled, rounded to six, where it remained delicately poised for the edge of a second; then, as if dragged by the hands of Destiny herself, it toppled, fell, and entered twenty-one.

"Congratulations!" cried Livingston. For one startled instant her eyes rested again on his. "Victory at last!" she responded, and put out her hand to gather in her winnings. Livingston's double-louis, magnified thirty-six times, made a glittering heap. She picked up the double-louis and held it out to its donor.

"Madame! To pay it back now would be to cross your luck. I beg you, wait until you have finished your game!"

She shrank away from him. Again the movement of her slim body showed a doubt that expressed something like pain. She flung out her arm, thin in its loosely wrinkling black glove, and pushed her winnings over to the Red.

The Red won.

In Aix they still talk of the scene that followed. Only the lady

that was the cause of all remained silent. The eager young man at her side found himself forgotten. She bent to her game in a kind of nervous fury which seemed to sweep all other thought from her mind. Without withdrawing a single coin to serve as bulwark, without hedging to obtain double advantage again against Fortune, she left notes and gold to lie together on the Red. The game was made, the ball spun. Again the Red was victorious. Before the rake of the croupier, another twenty-eight hundred and eighty flew across the table to join the heap guarded by the black veil. Again, and for the third time, she played the Red, and again the Red won.

The croupier leaned toward her. "I have the honor to inform madame," he said, "that the maximum is ten thousand francs."

She started back. "The maximum?" she asked in a startled voice. Livingston leaned toward her, delighted to explain.

"He means, madame, your stake is too high. Ten thousand francs is all you are allowed to bet at once. Here, take back this fifteen hundred francs."

"Thank you," she said. Her hand trembled as she withdrew the gold which his hand pushed toward her. Considering her style of play, her ignorance was surprising; as was also the fact that her eyes, instead of following the large stake which she left on the table, rested for one troubled instant on Livingston's. Her glittering glance, however, was not one which challenged admiration, but hostile thought. It was the glance of one who expects criticism and who arms oneself beforehand. And in the tones of her voice there was a ring of something like defiance as she uttered the single word:

"Maximum!"

Almost alone in that palpitating roomful she had backed the Red for the fourth time. The Red won.

Her luck seemed a thing personal and tangible, like the beauty of her eyes. A whisper flew about the table, about the room. From adjoining salons of the Casino, the other players came flocking. All eyes, all thoughts, centred on the keen white radiance of the face beneath the mourning hat—the face which, in so rapt a contemplation, was bent toward the tricky magic of the table.

She played on a system, the rumor flew. She had worked it out for herself; she had inherited it from her father, Baron X., the celebrated Belgian punter, and had sworn to him on his deathbed to reveal it to no one; she was the widow of a famous American gambler; she was royalty itself incognita! About Livingston's ear the various surmises flew and flashed. Meanwhile, the subject of all this excited gossip stood withdrawn in the flame of her own thought, and again backed the Red for the maximum.

What are the laws that govern blind chance, and sometimes produce

in chaos an order more baffling than chaos itself? Men of science tell us that these laws exist. Men of every degree have spent fortune, honor, life itself, in the attempt to trace their underlying principle. Once in just so many thousand times, it is doubtless ordained by natural law that one color shall turn up three times, nine times, twenty-seven times, running. Since the modern world has no place for miracles, it was no doubt by no transgression of natural forces, but rather by their fulfilment as naturally as by the downward swing of the marble ball, that for the fifth time, and the sixth time, the Red was blessed.

By this time the bank had begun to lose heavily. For a few moments the game was delayed, while the croupiers sent out for more cash.

Like a breathless greyhound paused for one fleet instant in the heat of the chase, the Comtesse Tuharczin leaned one slim hand on the edge of the table and waited. Her drooping eyelids lay like two inverted arches, darkly rimmed, against the whiteness of her cheeks. The furious excitement of the game, which had painted its crimson on even the sallow cheeks of the veterans, had disturbed her not at all. The whisper flying about the room, which imputed to her powers more than human, found something to meet it in her aspect; especially when contrasted with the almost pitiful excitement of the crowd about her. In the struggling mob were many women, panting and hysterical. The air was full of little cries, and harsh explosions of excitement, and incoherent wordless breaths. The Black was the favorite, but the Comtesse Tuharczin, with unvarying constancy, backed the Red to the maximum. Again, and for the seventh time, the Red won.

There was a murmur of wonder, almost of awe, that ran rippling through the Casino, out into the distant rooms whose unhappy occupants could obtain no glance of the enacted marvel.

"A run of seven!" The roomful nodded and sighed, storing up reminiscences for future use. The Comtesse Tuharczin stood uncertain, fingering a thousand-franc note. Then she turned to the elderly woman beside her, with a gesture as though she meant to leave the table. A murmur of jealous disappointment, that was almost a hiss, ran about the room. She turned and faced the throng.

"I know what you mean," she said. "It is against etiquette for me, having won so largely, to leave the game before the end of the evening. Very well! For one hour more, I play—I play to lose—each and every one of you may win of me if he can! Play well, for it is your last chance. When the hour is up, I have played my last game."

The gyrations of a comet seem the chance of mere blind caprice—

till we see that they fit a law more erratic yet. The Comtesse Tuharczin, forsaking the rigid adherence to sequence which had brought her so marvellous a good fortune, flung her money about in handfuls. But, like the sliding swoops of the comet, her play fitted at each angle of its crazy course into the orbit created by immutable law. Still she won. Gold rained upon her as upon Danaë. And all the time, the hands of the gilt and crystal clock travelled on toward twenty minutes after one, the hour appointed by her for the ending of her game.

It was, however, at seven minutes past one that the number 21, crazily backed for the maximum by the intrepid player, defeated possibility itself by seizing upon the flying ball. As it was the beginning of her evening's run, so it was the end. The onlookers, seasoned by this time to marvels, scarcely turned a hair. There was, however, some delay at the bank. The croupiers consulted together, then a messenger was despatched.

A few moments later way was cleft through the crowd for a tall, white-mustachioed gentleman with a red ribbon in his buttonhole. The face of the proprietor, known only to a distinguished few, produced a visible sensation; as did also the sight of the two valets at his back, carrying between them a black box like a coffin. The crowd swayed and strained in awed silence.

The decorated gentleman, opening his black leather-bound cartons, flung down to the croupiers a mass of paper-wrapped cubes. These chinked heavily as impassive hands counted out before the lady the amount of her last stake, ten thousand francs magnified by thirty-six.

The stillness of death was in the thickly-packed room, while the croupiers covered the tables and locked the empty bank. The proprietor turned with an elegant bow first to the right, then to the left. His voice rang hollowly in that straining silence:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I have the honor to inform you that the bank has jumped."

III.

A HALF-HOUR later, the heroine of the evening was still standing beside the little velvet divan, awaiting a convenient receptacle for carrying off her winnings. As though to offset the destructive victory by some counterbalancing inconvenience, the bank had paid its losses chiefly in the unwieldy glitter of gold.

Offers of aid were, naturally, forthcoming from every hand. She declined them with a courtesy which, though sweet like her voice, put a final stop to any possible advances. Henry, witnessing in delight this snubbing of his would-be rivals, came up with an air of ownership. Two hawk-eyed young fellows, with little red note-books, were

attempting to interview her for the press. Henry shouldered them aside, and addressed her in an undertone:

"And now, madame, you'll allow me to accompany you to your hotel?"

She shrank away with a gesture that was like a leap of fear. "What, monsieur?"

"Madame, I only meant that with this heap of cash it is dangerous for you to ride home unprotected. If you will allow me——"

She shook her head. "No, monsieur; I am not afraid," she said. Then she held out to him two pieces of gold, selected from the heap. "Your two louis, monsieur."

"But I cannot accept the payment to-night, madame. You said, to-morrow. And to-morrow, at any time or place you care to mention, I will accept them. To-morrow, perhaps, at the Casino des Fleurs? It is possible you will do me the honor to take tea with me?"

She laughed a little excited laugh, like the quivering of a taut wire.

"Because I have English friends, monsieur, you think to bribe me with tea?"

"It would be a bold man, madame, who tried to bribe the owner of that gold. No, I ask for charity!"

She blushed a deep red, but it was to his first words that her answer reverted. "That gold—ugh! You saw for yourself, monsieur, that I tried to lose it——"

"Madame, your valise!"

She swept swiftly about to face a valet of the Casino, who had been dispatched to her hotel for a bag, and who now returned. She raised her eyes to Henry's.

"If it would n't look odd," she said, "I think I should like to give something to these people—to these valets and croupiers, poor things! A hundred francs apiece—would that be enough? And will you give it to them, please?"

A ripple of delight went around the room as Henry executed her request; while she, oblivious of the admiration excited by her generosity, applied herself to the task of packing the money that she had tried in vain to lose.

As unconsciously as a schoolgirl packing for the holidays, as indifferently as though handling old gloves, she swept notes and gold together into the open bag. First one side, then the other—it was a fair-sized valise, but it bulged solidly as the elderly maid, with the valet's assistance, snapped the lock and buckled the straps. Two footmen, lifting it with a slow heave which spoke of its weight, carried the burden between them to the waiting car. The crowd pressed back to form a lane for its passage and for the fair owner of all this

visible wealth. She walked slowly, with a swish of black drapery and a waft of delicate perfume. Congratulations were showered upon her. She answered them with a bend of the neck. The valise was heavily shouldered to its place beside her in her touring-car, the door was slammed, and the next instant the machine sprang forward, whirled the curve of the driveway, and was gone.

Livingston's car, as it happened, was next. He sprang into it, and the car shot forward to make place for the next. As they leaped out between the high pillars of the driveway, Henry's searching eyes beheld the dwindling red lamp of the other automobile disappearing down the midnight emptiness of the street.

"Théophile," he cried, "follow that car!"

What followed happened all so quickly that in Livingston's mind there was scarcely consciousness of the sequence of events. His machine, swooping headlong, overtook the other just as it pulled up short before the darkened façade of the Hôtel Splendide. At the same moment he beheld a creeping shadow, in opera-hat and inverness, that slid from the shadows of the porte-cochère. The lady's chauffeur, springing to the ground, flung open the door of the machine. Something white and long, like a whirling serpent, cut through the air. There was no sound, but the chauffeur fell like a tree.

But hardly had his head touched the pavement before Henry Livingston was out over the side of his tonneau. His ready hand cocked the revolver which, by fortunate warning received in Paris, was never absent from his pocket.

"Stop!" he shouted.

The assassin, looking into the open mouth of the revolver, needed no further warning. He turned and ran. Another dark shape, emerging from the darkness, fled beside him. With uplifted weapon, Henry dashed in pursuit. Then, like a flash, the thought of the woman thus left undefended came to arrest his flying steps. Another instant brought him back to the object of his thoughts, kneeling on the sidewalk beside her prostrate driver. With Livingston's assistance, she loosened the man's collar.

"Look!" She drew a long breath that testified, in its very relief, to the tender heart beneath. "He's opening his eyes. Are you much hurt, Paul?"

The man opened his eyes, sighed, then struggled up, sitting. With a careful hand he rubbed the back of his neck. "Something hit me here," he said vaguely. Livingston, stooping down, picked from the sidewalk that sinister sausage of white. It was, however, ripped and flattened, and the sand poured from it in a shower.

"The accident of a missed stitch," said Livingston quietly—"that's what saved your life, my man!" In the darkness of the porte-

cochère, something suddenly caught the speaker's eye. A moment later he held in his hand a stout walking-stick, heavily loaded at the top. He shuddered as he glanced from the flower-like head before him, uplifted in so undaunted a courage, to the brutal implement in his hand.

"These are cowards' weapons," he said, with a long breath of repulsion, "sand-bag and bludgeon—they make no report, and draw no blood."

He heard her breath flutter for one instant in the darkness, but her hand was steady as she extended it to touch the deadly instrument in Henry's hand.

"Fancy lifting that thing against a living head!" she said in a low tone.

"I am thankful, madame, that you live!" returned the young man fervently. She shivered.

"You warned me, monsieur, that I took too much risk in returning home alone," she said. "You will admit my generosity, I think, when you see that I feel no resentment against you for being proved in the right."

"Madame, you proved your generosity when you gave me the opportunity to serve you!"

She raised her large eyes, luminous in the lamp-light. "To serve me—me? But what do you know of me? What can you think of me?" Her voice was hardly more than a whisper. Livingston, thrilled with delight at this unexpected value set on his opinion, leaned toward her ardently.

"Madame, if I might be permitted to know more of you! If I might be permitted to tell you what I think!"

At one end of the street carriage-lamps were approaching, and the glare of outstripped automobiles hurrying home from the Casino. The maid, whimpering, plucked at her mistress's arm. The night porter of the hotel strolled yawning down the steps. As though with a violent effort, the lady withdrew her eyes from Livingston's gaze.

"Paul," she said swiftly to her chauffeur, "can you walk?"

Livingston stooped to his aid. Then, raising his voice, he called: "Théophile!"

The victim, in full enjoyment of his momentary importance, was helped up the steps by the driver of the other car and by the suddenly inquisitive porter. The lady, raising her heavy black veil, turned and held out her hand to the American.

"Monsieur," she said, "it seems to me I owe you my life. After that acknowledgment, thanks are idle. But I do thank you, and from my heart. Good-night."

Her hand dropped his, and she turned swiftly to the door of the hotel. Livingston stood transfixed in amazement.

"Madame," he cried, "your money!"

She turned and faced him. Her forgetfulness was either absurd or sublime. To the infatuated young man on the sidewalk, it appeared sublime. The lady's high black eyebrows, however, unbent for the second time in a smile.

"What would you?" she said. "I forgot it!"

The American stood with the deadly weight of the bludgeon dangling from his hand.

"What are you going to do with the stuff?" he asked desperately.

"You will put it in the bank to-morrow?"

She nodded. Fresh difficulties assailed his imagination.

"But to-night?" he cried. "You see for yourself they lose no time. Your room—pardon me, but your doors have good locks?"

"Such locks as one finds on hotel doors," she answered.

With his pistol hand, Livingston made a gesture of despair. "And every valet in the hotel," he said, "has a pass-key!"

She surveyed him seriously. "If you advise it, monsieur," she said, "I will send for a *sergent de ville* to stand guard."

"But who is to stand guard over the *sergent de ville*?" His voice almost shook in its tragic perplexity. The splendid prize of the evening seemed to him now no more than a golden mill-stone, tied about this lovely neck to its own hideous destruction. "Madame," he cried in sudden earnestness, "is it possible you don't understand? Even after the most ordinary luck at the tables, the winner is marked down as the prey of every rascal in town. But with such a fortune as you have there—why, who is to answer for the honesty of the hotel proprietor himself? You have seen the risk you take. I beseech you, be careful to-night, be careful to-night!"

She stepped close to him, raising her eyes to his. "Monsieur," she said, "you have done me one service of inestimable value; so I have the less hesitation in asking you for another. Will you take this dangerous treasure of mine and guard it for the night?"

"What?" cried Livingston, staring.

The maid, whose whimpering urgency did not cease, had already ascended the broad flight of steps to the hotel's open door. Théophile, issuing, was held by her in one instant's conversation. An immense touring-car turned the corner of the street.

"They come here, to this hotel!" said the Comtesse suddenly. "I must not let them see me standing here so, with you, monsieur. Still more important yet, I must let them see me go upstairs empty-handed!"

Like a darting bird, shadowy-winged, she turned to her car that

still stood beside the curb. With a flashing gesture of her two slim arms, she seized the plethoric valise that sat like a stuffed financier upon the seat. Her slender back scarcely stiffened as she swung it to the ground and into the hands of the astounded American. He was a man of more than ordinary muscular power; but his hands, gripping the straps, almost let slip the solid weight thus lightly tossed into them.

"Good-night," she said. "And when you return it, ask for the Comtesse Tuharczin!"

IV.

THE guardian of a million francs in notes and gold might in any case be supposed to pass a restless night, even if the money were his own. But when it happens to be the property of the most adorable woman in the world, entrusted to him without the formality of demanding an acknowledgment, the responsibility grows to sickening proportions. In both salon and bedroom, Henry Livingston turned on all the electric lights and pushed wardrobes against the doors. Then with pistol in one hand and the late assassin's bludgeon in the other, he sat down to guard the bulging valise.

Never had he dreamed that hours could be so long as those which stretched from two o'clock till eleven the next morning.

However, the desired hour arrived at last. Valise in hand, Livingston strode across the gay little Avenue des Bains, and entered the hotel opposite his own.

The *portier* surveyed him with a politely misbelieving eye.

"Monsieur is the eighty-seventh person to inquire this morning for madame the Comtesse. So far she has denied everybody. It is of course certain that she will recognize the name of monsieur?"

"Ah!" For the first time, Henry realized the doubtfulness whether his name would carry any meaning to the lady whose treasurer he was. Sir Jasper, in presenting him to the tableful of ladies on that memorable first day, had, after the continental fashion, omitted to mention his name. Had she ever heard it since? He did not know.

"Tell madame the Comtesse, the American gentleman whom she expects on business—with a bag."

"Yes, monsieur."

Henry sat down to wait. All about him, in the crowd that passed and repassed in the vestibule, buzzed the name of last night's heroine. "A run of eight."—"Impossible to defeat the bank in the long run."—"Name of a name, she defeated it rudely well, this little one!" Speculations on the amount she had won, on her origin and her position, flew through the air. Finally the valet was seen approaching. The impatient visitor leaped to his feet.

"Madame the Comtesse can receive me now—at once?"

"I regret to inform monsieur, madame the Comtesse is receiving no one to-day," answered the man, "and she seems to see no reason why she should make an exception for monsieur."

One or two bystanders, who had just received similar messages, snickered audibly. Henry pulled himself together.

"Very well, I will see her later. But—the bag?"

The valet's glance fell on the valise at the visitor's feet. "The bag? Ah, a thousand pardons, but I was forgetting. Madame the Comtesse said, monsieur, that the bag belonged to you, and you were to keep it."

Rage swelled in Livingston's heart. Stiffening his muscles against the solid weight of the rejected coin, he picked up the unfortunate bag and marched from the hotel.

Once in his own room, he flung his burden violently into a corner. His reward was a burst seam and a sliding gush of gold. He took out one of his own motor-trunks, emptied his clothes on the bed, and locked up the spoilt valise. Then he sat down to think.

A valet, knocking at the door, asked whether monsieur would descend to breakfast. With a start, Livingston came out of his reverie to realize the practical perplexity of his position. He dared not leave his room, even to go to lunch, and leave a million francs of trust money behind him. So he ate his solitary meal in his room, with his eyes fixed on the little trunk.

Lunch over, he locked his door again and sat down to consider ways and means. The message received through the valet, that he was to consider the bag his own, might, of course, be a piece of insanity, or the evidence of a deep-laid plot. After all, was this not a possible explanation? Delighted at any prospect of action, Livingston sprang to the bell and rang for his chauffeur. A half-hour later the little leather trunk, with its extraordinary weight, was heaved up to its place at the motor's side; and the owner was off full speed for the post-office.

Three letters, directed in various handwritings, and six telegrams in varying phraseology, formed the sum of the communication dispatched to the Comtesse Tuharczin. As he dared not leave the motor with its precious burden, Livingston sat like an invalid while Théophile dashed back and forth with telegraph-blanks and stamps.

A spin over glorious hill roads completed the afternoon. But neither streaming landscape nor whipping air could touch in the motorist's heart his accustomed joy of the road. This was the hour when he had looked forward to sitting opposite the loveliest face in the world, at a little table at the Casino des Fleurs. Motoring in solitary grandeur was, after all, a dry amusement.

To account for the stupendous weight of the little trunk which he must now carry everywhere with him was a task that loomed suddenly large before his straining imagination. So far, he had no reason to fear that its contents were suspected. Last night, his chauffeur had driven away to the garage before the Comtesse had made her admirer the repository of her troublesome wealth. So far, the whereabouts of last night's prodigious winnings might be considered a secret. Should it leak out, Livingston knew well that his life in Aix would not be worth a pin.

As the motor swooped down again from the hills to the city below, Livingston's mind flew rapidly over all possible projects. To take the bag back to the Hôtel Splendide and leave it to be delivered to the Comtesse Tuharczin might be playing straight into the hands of a villainous hotel proprietor. To take it to the bank at Aix for deposit was to court a publicity which might later recoil to his serious disadvantage. To send the money on to Paris was to risk the same disadvantage, with the added danger of loss in transport. No, the charge that he had received with so exalted a delight was now bound about his neck. He might wonder, wriggle, or rage; there the charge remained, with its crushing weight. Until a way opened for honorable discharge from his trust, he must continue to carry it.

At the post-office, by way of compromise, he stopped again to send a telegram to Paris. As it was impossible to foresee how long this treasure-laden bag would continue in his possession, and as he could not continue to carry it everywhere with him, he wired to his hotel in Paris to forward him his big trunk with the safety lock. This dispatch, once sent, seemed a slight measure of precaution against future inconvenience.

As they crossed the wide green square, with its band-stand and gay promenade, a sudden sight brought Livingston's heart into his mouth. At the foot of the church steps at the north side of the place waited a black automobile that Henry had seen before; and beneath the gray marble arches of the church door was disappearing a slim black shape with a wide-floating black veil.

"To the church, Théophile, quick!" cried Livingston in furious excitement. In three seconds his car had halted at the curb, and he was out of the tonneau in a trice. Then sudden remembrance caught him by the throat. Even dared he break in on the lady's devotions, how leave that lump of trust money, under the thin disguise of a motor trunk, unguarded there in the street?

So he waited, helpless in his seat, like the man with the marble legs. The minutes dragged. Other worshippers passed by him—not so many, in this city of pleasure. And at every opening of the door his nerves jumped all together in an ecstasy of anticipation.

Suddenly the heavy bronze-bound door opened to disclose a waving shadow of black. The evening breeze caught the veil, and Henry had a glimpse of the face beneath—a familiar face, pale, yet flushed in the pink light of the sunset. The eyes, shining wide open in the same radiance, were full upon him.

He jumped to his feet, bowing. For a moment the Comtesse Tuharczin stood there with her crape veil drawn back, and her vivid eyes burning on his in a strange intensity of vision. Then, as though drawing all her forces together for one convulsive effort, she shrank rather than moved back into the church again. The door swung to behind her, and Henry Livingston was left staring.

If he had had any doubts about the authenticity of the morning's rebuff, he could have none now. His acquaintance was cut, even at the price of a million francs for the luxury. With as much dignity as he could muster, he turned to the demure Théophile and ordered him back to the hotel.

V.

BUT if the lady could throw off his acquaintance, he could not so easily throw off the responsibility with which she had freighted him. He heard sarcastic remarks tossed from one porter to the other as the wretched trunk, with its two hundredweight of solid metal, was heaved back to his room. All in alarm at the danger of discovery, he decided he could not again take the risk of transporting so strangely heavy a piece of luggage. To remain in his room till the safety trunk arrived from Paris was dreary, but not so appalling as the prospect of robbery. Accordingly, he sent out for a heap of yellow-backed plays, a pack of cards, and all the newspapers. Until relief came, his room would have to be his prison.

By the time twilight fell, his restless feet had worn a thin gray trail in the carpet. He had only one consolation. Unless there was a back door to the Hôtel Splendide, the Comtesse Tuharczin had been held a prisoner all this time no less than he.

The next morning brought news to the impatient prisoner, in the shape of the Paris papers. From the front page of the *Matin*, the beauty of the Comtesse looked up at him in a portrait almost life-size.

Greedily his eye swept down the page. There was her story, as related him by Sir Jasper Warrington. The French origin, the Servian marriage, the husband's death in the service of the late king—all the details were there just as he had heard them; with a few picturesque additions thrown in by the reporter.

That night at eleven o'clock, the porter dispatched by Henry received from the Paris *rapide* a large Saratoga trunk with an im-

posing lock. Half an hour later the motor trunk containing the treasure of the Comtesse Tuharczin was safely bestowed within it; and Henry Livingston, with the key tied about his neck, was deep in the first real sleep that had visited his eyelids for two nights.

VI.

THE dawn broke fair. Henry Livingston woke early. His first thought was, *Liberty!*

Four o'clock—too early to send for Théophile and the car. And besides, muscles cramped by two days' confinement demanded a vigorous stretch. Blue against the saffron of the dawn, the mountains beckoned alluringly.

Henry opened the Saratoga trunk, the automobile trunk, the burst valise inside of all. Twenty minutes sufficed to make a rough count of the notes and gold within. One million and fifteen thousand francs in crackling pale blue paper and chinking gold! He bundled the cash back again into its various receptacles, filled up the trunk with motor-coats and rugs, and locked it securely. Then he wrote a formal receipt for the money, which he dispatched to the Splendide by the hand of the yawning servant that brought his coffee. After which, with the trunk-key on his watch-chain and an alpenstock in his hand, he was off for the mountains.

The morning, though hazy, was deliciously soft and fresh. The city was wrapped in sleep, the hills in trailing streamers of white vapor. On the highest peak glimmered the outlines of a cross. So distant did it appear that Livingston, taking it as his objective point, stopped to rout up a sleeping confectioner, and to fill his pockets with Swiss chocolate.

A wet wind struck his face as he neared the summit. It was a wind that came with rolling vapors and low-sweeping clouds. Glancing downward, Henry saw that lake and city had been swallowed up together in a thick opacity of white. The next moment the mountain-tops followed. He stood alone in a tiny world of his own, floored with heather and walled with a feathery circle of fog.

To the mountain-climber, fog spells calamity. In undertaking the climb in such weather, Henry had courted his risks. In refusing the beaten road on the side of the railway, he had changed risk into certainty. He was lost in the fog, on a trackless mountain top, where a misstep might bring him to the edge of a ravine, or a loose pebble might send him flying over the sheer precipice that fronted the lake. He lit a fresh cigar, sat down on a convenient boulder, and waited.

The sun climbed higher. Then came heavier clouds which hid

the sun and changed the fog to a thick, drizzling mist. The rain struck through Henry's thin coat and soaked him to the skin. After the heat of the summer plain below, the mountain breeze touched his wet frame with an intolerable iciness. He jumped to his feet. As well risk a broken neck as an attack of pneumonia. He started off at a brisk pace, whither he knew not, through the blindness of the mist.

Suddenly a sound smote his ear out of the emptiness about him—a strange sound, like the wind made suddenly articulate. He pulled up short and listened. The sound was repeated. It was a human sob.

On the solitary mountain-top, that weeping utterance had in it something of the ghostly. For the moment, Henry stood still. Old fantastic terrors of boyhood, long forgotten, surged up in sudden strange vividness through his soul. In that blind and silent loneliness, the sudden intrusion of a human presence held in it, as on Crusoe's island, something of the terrible—that is, if the presence were human. Henry held his breath and listened. There was no further sound.

"What's the matter?" he shouted, in the clearest-toned French that he could muster. "Who wants help?"

From the pale opacity about him rose the thin chimes of a church-clock far below. Henry held his breath and listened. Ten strokes, faint like a breath, then silence again.

A gust of rain-filled wind struck him again like a cold shower-bath. He shivered, and started again on his weary march. Suddenly before him loomed the faint, dark outlines of a tall cross—the same cross that he had perceived from the valley below. He stumbled forward through the wet heather. There beside the cairn of stones which formed the foundation of the cross he beheld a little misty heap.

A few steps more showed it to him as the figure of a kneeling woman. She raised her face, clear white against the gray of the fog. For a few moments they remained staring at each other through the drifting blur of moisture.

Livingston was the first to recover himself. With a tug at the sodden wreck of his hat, he bowed low.

"Good-morning, Comtesse," he said.

VII.

SHE struggled to her feet with a cramped awkwardness which showed the length of her vigil. Her bright eyes shot to the right and to the left, as if seeking a way of escape. Then she carried one of her hands to her throat, and spoke with an obvious effort:

"Good-morning, monsieur."

"What's the matter?" cried Livingston hurriedly.

She stared at him with an odd expression. Her face was wet, with tears or with rain; and the drops stood like liquid spangles on her dark hair.

"The fog came up," she answered. "I was afraid of the cliffs. So I stayed here." She gathered up her wet black skirts as though for immediate departure. A glance at the blank white walls about her, however, seemed to relax even her intense desire to be gone. She stood shrinking, troubled, in a deep and unconcealed confusion.

"But you are hurt," he urged anxiously. "Did n't I hear you crying?"

"I was praying," she answered.

Livingston stared at her. The idea of this woman who had rattled the gold above the green table now prostrated in prayer before a mountain shrine had for him an incongruity that was almost amazing. But the idea of piety in woman had for him, as for most men, an exquisiteness that completed her charm. And with the sudden lifting of his idea of her came a throb of emotion which the nearness of her beauty completed. For the moment he forgot his own embarrassments of the past few days, in anger at the risk to which she had thus wantonly exposed herself.

"You did very wrong!" he cried with a heat which he did not try to justify even to himself. "Suppose I had n't come—suppose this fog lasts all day, as it very well may—suppose it lasts a week! What would have become of you? You had no right to come here alone!"

She surveyed him with a little wondering glance, touched with a smile that showed an understanding of his violence. But her answer was insistent, distressed.

"I came here to pray. I needed to pray. I have so much need to pray!"

"There, madame, you will permit me to doubt you! But even though you judge yourself guilty of great sins, surely there are other places to expiate them besides this lonely mountain-top! There's the church——"

He stopped short, caught by the odd expression which her bright eyes flashed at him. As plainly as though her lips had uttered it, he understood that it was on his account she avoided the church in the town.

"Madame! Then, since that day when I met you at the church door, you have come here to pray?"

She nodded in the embarrassed manner of one who unwillingly yields the truth. "Yes, monsieur."

"In the early morning?"

"At dawn, monsieur, by the first trip of the funicular."

"But why avoid me?" he cried impetuously. "What have I done, madame, that even at the risk of exposing yourself to dangers like this, that even at the risk of losing a fortune, you refuse my acquaintance so entirely? I beg you, Comtesse, what have I done to offend?"

"Nothing," she replied softly, and with a shake of the head that sent the rain-drops flying from her hair.

"Then in Heaven's name," he cried, "what is the reason you have treated me in this way?"

She lifted her eyes to him. The steel blade of her glance was sheathed in the trembling mist that clung to her lashes, and in the new expression of beseeching wistfulness with which she surveyed the young man before her.

"I was ashamed," she answered.

"Ashamed, Comtesse? It would be very droll to hear what you ever did to be ashamed of!"

But in the eyes which she lifted to him there lay the shadow of a very real suffering. "You know! I gambled. And gambling is a deadly sin. I tried to lose, but the money came to me like the fiends to Saint Hyppolita. And it was your money, all of it! For I had taken your money to play with, like—like a bad woman."

The words came pouring out, choking in her throat like the utterance of an intolerable thought. Henry Livingston opened his eyes in amazement. Where was it bred, the audacity which conquered even the old punters of Aix, the tender delicacy which redeemed its fancied stain even at the cost of a million francs?

"Then, that was the reason you refused to take your money?"

"It was your money, monsieur. Did I not send you word by the valet, it belonged to you?"

She spoke with an obstinacy which, quivering in her voice, defied contradiction. Henry faced her. At last he had the chance to combat the maddening puzzle that had made his life a burden.

"One double-louis, madame, is mine. The rest is yours—a trifle over a million francs."

"A million francs!" she cried with sudden artlessness. "Is it as much as that?"

"You will count it for yourself, Comtesse, when I send it to you this afternoon."

She tightened her soft lips. "No, monsieur."

"Yes, madame." His determination rose to meet hers. "You may not want the money; but, at least, it is not mine. You must take it from me. But remember, you need not keep it. You might give it away."

"Monsieur, it is not mine to give."

"But it is! You won it. You can give it to charity—to the Church."

She started a little, and her voice came with obvious difficulty as she added: "But suppose, monsieur, the Church refused to accept it from me?"

He answered, smiling faintly: "Don't worry, Comtesse! Even tainted money—how do you say it in French?—the Church can swallow it all!"

Her large eyes turned upon him a glance of such austerity that he was abashed at his ill-timed pleasantry. "I beg your pardon from my heart, Comtesse. And now suppose we settle this discussion another time. We are fellow-prisoners; we should share our cell in peace. May I ask how long you have been here?"

"I came on the early funicular, monsieur."

"At five o'clock! And now it's nearly noon." A sudden thought struck him. "Any breakfast?"

She shook her head. "I pray fasting, monsieur."

Her eyes shone resolute, but her voice had a weary droop which showed her exhaustion. Henry's heart melted in pity, warmed in the sudden glow of a perceived opportunity to do a service for the one beloved. With a sudden eager gesture, he shook the pockets of his coat empty and wrung it dry.

"There, Comtesse, we'll have a seat for you, any way!" he cried boyishly, as he folded the wet tweed and laid it down beside the cairn. "Here—so that you can lean against these stones. And now, as it's my rule never to climb without provision, I have some chocolate here which I'll beg you to share."

She took the hand which he offered to assist her, and silently sat down. Henry sat beside her, and offered her the chocolate, which its tin-foil wrappings had preserved from the wet. They munched in silence, like two children. Henry still felt upon his palm the touch of those little wet fingers, hot and fluttering, which for an instant had lain in his. The white-walled circle of fog, which a few moments before had been a solitary cell of infinite dreariness, had been changed to a circle of enchantment. Joy dwelt within it—joy struggled for, despaired of, tossed by chance into his hand. He lifted his eyes and smiled at her, and she smiled in return. The chocolate had brought back some of the color into her face. But he saw only her eyes, dark-rimmed and shining through the pale-blue transparency of mist; her eyes and the rose-red of her mouth. As she smiled, the upper lip twitched and drew back—a quaint little twitch, so easily made in that soft surface. So soft, so warm—

"Comtesse," he asked suddenly, "are you long at Aix?"

She started violently. "Long at Aix? No, monsieur. In a few days I must go home."

His heart sank. "To Belgrade?"

"To Belgrade, yes." Her answer came with evident unwillingness. Henry's heart sank lower still. Were any invitation extended to him, it would be so easy, with a motor, to go to Belgrade! But none came.

"Of course, madame," he said calmly, "you are in a hurry to return home. Doubtless your family are waiting for you—your husband, your children, perhaps——"

The last words choked him. He stopped and swallowed hard. Madame Tuharczin hesitated, then answered with an embarrassment as deep as his own:

"Monsieur, I have no children; and my husband is no longer living. Except for some distant cousins, I am quite alone."

"Ah!" Henry's breath, released from its strangulation of doubt, came out in a bursting sigh of relief. "Then, madame, why do you leave Aix?"

She answered hurriedly: "Because I ought to go, monsieur. I ought to go away to-morrow—to-day!"

"And do you always do what you ought to do, Comtesse?" he asked with outward gaiety, but with a sinking heart. To his surprise, her agitation, instead of lessening at his pleasantry, mounted into sudden and unconcealed distress.

"You despise me!" was her very unexpected answer, uttered in a voice which recalled the sobbing utterance overheard an hour ago.

"Despise you? Ah, Comtesse!" His voice choked on the word. Insensibly he drew nearer to her. To his exalted senses, it seemed that the gust of rain-filled vapor, sighing past them, wrapped them away together in a kind of transfiguration. "Comtesse, does it matter to you what I think of you?"

She did not answer, but turned her head away in a tortured shyness that seemed more than virginal. Then, as though drawn by a power stronger than her own will, she turned slowly back again. The rose-red mouth was half open, like that of a panting runner. The eyes were shining wide open and fixed in a helpless sort of fascination upon Livingston. Whatever he felt, it was written transparently upon her that she felt no less. His heart rose in a gust of triumph.

"Madame, it was because you feared my misunderstanding of your character that you have shut yourself up like a hermit these past few days—that you have come to this wild spot for your prayers—that you have refused your million francs?"

She nodded, like one from whom the truth is torn in an agony of travail. "I had acted very foolishly. I was afraid you would think me a bad woman. I could n't bear to think of seeing you again."

"Then, Comtesse, why did n't you leave Aix? To stay here under those conditions meant to lock yourself in prison. Why did you stay?"

Still her eyes were fixed on his, like the eyes of one half hypnotized. The truth stood in them, as transparent as the irids of water-gray.

"Comtesse, tell me! Why did n't you leave Aix?"

Still she was silent. In sudden daring he laid his hand on her wet arm.

"Tell me! You say you could n't bear to think of facing me. But neither could you bear to think of leaving me—is that what you mean? Me—me?"

She surveyed him with a sudden look of exaltation like that of a triumphant angel. The quivering scarlet of her mouth was very near. Henry bent toward her. Suddenly she leaped to her feet with a little shattering cry:

"No, no!"

Her repulse was as unexpected, as confounding, as had been her mute confession. Henry stood erect before her, grasping her hands.

"Why do you say no? You love me, you cannot deny it! And I love you, with all my heart and my soul and my strength. What is to keep us apart?"

She writhed her hands away from his. Her strength was amazing, like that of a serpent. Henry held her hands in a firm grasp, but his muscles were taxed to the utmost.

"Tell me, what is to keep us apart? Your husband is dead—you are free?"

"Yes," she whispered.

"I also am free. I love you. Do you doubt that?" he cried passionately.

"No, no; I don't doubt that."

"And you love me—do you deny it?"

This time her voice was lower, but vibrating like a taut-drawn wire:

"I do not deny it."

"Then why," he cried in a burst of honest longing, "won't you marry me?"

This time she leaped away from him with a suddenness which took him unawares. Her two freed hands were clasped about the base of her swelling throat, left bare in its whiteness by the rain-soaked wisp of straggling black lace.

"Marry you?" she panted.

"But you said you loved me!" he cried urgently.

"But marriage! Do I know you? Do you know me?"

"I feel," he said with fervid conviction, "as if I had known you all my life!"

Her large eyes met his in an answering flame. Her words seemed not so much a conscious response as the involuntary crystallizing of her thought in spoken words.

"How strange!" she said with simplicity—"for do you know that is just what I have felt, too? It has seemed to me that you were a friend that I had lost, and suddenly found again after, oh, so many years! Do you remember that first day that I met you, with those kind Warringtons? You looked so tall and strong and kind—I was afraid to look at you, for fear you would read in my eyes that I wanted to go to you and put my hand in yours! All that week, whenever we met—oh, the joy, the joy that frightened me! Then that dreadful night I went to the Casino. Why did I go? I wanted to play, only once! My father used to tell me of the *trente-et-quarante*—it seemed so simple, I wanted to try it only once and see what would happen! So I tried. I knew it was wicked—and then I lost every sou! How ashamed I was, when you came and saw me there! I could see what kind of a woman you thought me, when you offered me your money. But I took it—if I had refused it, I should have had to go home, for I had lost my last coin. Then luck came to me—oh, it was like a madness! Is it wrong for me to tell you these things? I do not know. It seems to me that they say themselves! For I want you to understand what shame I have felt that I did that wicked thing—that I brought myself down to the level of a common *cocotte*—and before you, of all people in the world!"

The artlessness of her confession, the delicacy of her scruples, were all that was needed to carry Livingston's kindled ardor to the extreme of reckless resolve. His whole earthly life and all that should come after seemed little enough to offer in pledge to this mysterious and enchanting being whom he had known for a bare two weeks.

"Madame, I know that your rank is far above mine. You are of noble, perhaps of royal, blood. But whether it be presumption or not, I ask you to be my wife. And I will offer to you and to your friends every guarantee that, so far as in me lies, I am a man who will make you a tender and an honorable husband."

She shrank back against the wet stones of the cairn. Wistful yearning trembled on her crimson mouth, but resolution sat in her eyes. She answered his question with another:

"Monsieur, when you came on me here just now, do you know what I was praying for?"

"For what?"

"Monsieur, I am a woman who knows little of the world. I have led a strange life, perhaps—though you may not believe me, it is the truth that I know little of men and their ways. But from the first moment when I caught your eyes fixed upon me at the

Casino that afternoon, it seemed to me that I foresaw this moment. And when you came on me just now, I was praying for strength to answer no."

"Then forgive me, Comtesse," cried Henry stubbornly, "but it was a wicked prayer! You are making two lives miserable—for what?"

"Because, monsieur, it is the truth—the truth, before God—that I ought not to marry you."

"You say that you ought not; but I say, before Heaven! that you ought. Come! You do not deny you are a free woman?"

"I am free—yes."

"And there," he cried, gripping her two slim arms in his resolute clasp, "you say what is not true! No longer a free woman—never, never free again! For you are mine, do you hear that? You belong to me, as I belong to you. Mine, darling, mine!"

Her tensely stiffened arms grew soft and limp beneath his touch. Her two eyes were fixed on his in a dazzled, trembling glance. Her cheek was cool with the wetness of the rain, but her lips, when he found them, were warm. *

An hour later they sat together in the little stone-built refuge, waiting for the funicular which puffed every moment nearer. The fog had lifted, and the sun was bursting through. With a fantastic desire for some material token of his happiness, Livingston had insisted upon hanging on her gold chain the gold eagle decorated with his initials, whose lucky toss had brought him to Aix; and she, in return, had bestowed upon him a little enamelled locket with her picture in it. "But don't look on the other side of the locket," she said with a shudder. "There's—my husband on the other side!"

He made a movement of repulsion. As he opened it to survey the tiny presentment of the beloved features, he was careful to cover the other side with his thumb; as though by this single gesture he could shut out the mystery of her previous life, which by his silence he disowned.

"You begin to live at this moment," he said with passion. "I refuse to recognize that you have lived before. You belong to me—all, all to me! To no one but me!"

VIII.

THE week that followed was for Henry Livingston one of pure enchantment. Nothing in his previous life could have given him the idea that he could feel such entire absorption in one single person, or that one person could fill his days with so complete and ravishing a joy. He faced the future and planned for it; but, nevertheless, he

lived in the present moment, with a haunting fear lest it be all that should be destined to him of delight.

To his pleas for an early marriage, his betrothed gave a hesitating assent. It was at dinner, the evening following their adventure on the mountain-top, that she gave him in a few brief words the details of her history. On her quiet and ascetic girlhood, spent in a secluded French country-side, she was eloquent; on the piety of her mother, who had reared her in deeply religious habits; on the brilliant, decaying charm of her father, who expiated thus in poverty-stricken retirement the mistakes of a wildly extravagant youth, her descriptions were vivid; the ancient, half-ruined villa, the cloistered dreariness of a youth so different from any that he had ever known—she made these things live for him. Here, however, detail ceased. When she came to the Servian nobleman who by wayward chance had seen her, and by more wayward chance had married her, the bare facts only were given; then dismissed with a visible shudder.

IX.

A WEEK later, when the word was spoken between them, it was with a more definite purpose. Livingston was disturbed, agitated. For the first time he realized a fact that his American unconsciousness had previously caused him to forget: namely, that in this delay of their marriage he was seriously risking the name and reputation of his future wife.

On her side the papers necessary for the marriage were complete. The birth certificate had arrived from La Vouvray, together with the sworn statement of her parents' death. From Belgrade had come documents even more indispensable: her marriage certificate and the certificate of her husband's death. All these documents were carefully assembled in a sealed envelope which she displayed to Livingston, ready to be taken to the Mayor's office when his own should arrive from America. He chafed at the sight of them. He had only that day overheard in the foyer of his hotel remarks which cast jocular doubt on his relations with the adored fair woman before him. Had the jokers been of his own sex, he might have had the satisfaction of calling them to account; but they were women, and he raged helplessly.

"If only my papers would come! Here is my father's cable. He's all I have, you know, except a brother somewhere in Japan. Father tells me to go ahead. He trusts my judgment, and he's always wanted a daughter. He's prompt enough, dear old boy! But my papers—they can't be cabled. Confound it, if one could only go out and get married, the way you can in God's country!"

"Then there is a country where one does like that!" Rosalie spoke with elaborate carelessness, though the trembling of her hands as she tied on her veil showed how profoundly the idea moved her. They were together in her little salon, and she was preparing for a day's motoring with Livingston. "I did n't know that. In Serbia, I know, it's worse than here—if you could have seen our cart-loads of papers when I was married! But there are countries, you say——" She paused, and flamed red. "Where?" she asked. "Could one go there?"

"My country—and England too." In a sudden inspiration, he leaped to his feet. "Confound it!" he cried. "That's an idea of yours. We'll go to England! Lady Warrington was a friend of my mother's—she's your friend! She'll receive you, of course. I'll wire her at once."

It was twilight when they returned, after a lunch at Chamounix and a ramble among the foot-hills of Mont Blanc. They had spoken little. The touch of their joined finger-tips sufficed to communicate each to each the revelation of a mystery more ancient and more compelling than that of the dark mountain-land through which they sped. Livingston's eyes were on hers as he helped her from the motor at the door of the Splendide; but he spoke only of the practical matters between them:

"I'll go and see if there's any answer to my English wire, shall I? Then I'll send you word. It would be more discreet for me not to join you this evening, I suppose. But I'll write you, dearest!"

The *portier* of the Splendide came forward with a respectful bow and a bustling air of mystery. "Madame the Comtesse, some one has arrived."

She stared. "Who has arrived? I am expecting nobody."

"That's what I thought, so it seemed to me that madame might welcome a word of warning—also monsieur." He glanced at Livingston with intense knowingness, then lowered his voice to a whisper:

"Madame the Comtesse, monsieur the Comte has arrived!"

"What?" cried Henry. Rosalie stood dumb. The *portier* nodded in arch sympathy as he turned away.

"He is upstairs now, in the apartment of madame the Comtesse."

Rosalie turned to Livingston. Her face was like a piece of crumpled white paper.

"I don't understand it," she said, speaking very slowly, with gaps between her words, like one in great pain. "I have no husband. He's dead."

Down the wide stairway which led into the foyer where they stood came a young man, slender, fair, with the beauty of a Greek statue, and dressed in the foppish extreme of the fashion. His large eyes,

which were red-rimmed and darkly circled, were fixed smilingly on the woman at Livingston's side.

"Rosalie!" he cried faintly. She made a little sound in her throat, but did not answer. He advanced and kissed her hand.

"It's you!" she said in a strangling voice. "You!"

"Yes, I, *chérie*," he returned with a twist of his blonde mustache. "I saw my little wife's picture one morning in the *Matin*, at my club. So I came here all the way from Vienna, to find her again."

"That picture in the Paris papers!" she said between clenched teeth.

"Yes, my treasure. Allow me to congratulate you on your amazing skill at trente-et-quarante; also on your success in dishonoring the old saw: 'Lucky at cards, unlucky at——'" He broke off with a smile of indescribable cynicism. "You have n't presented me to monsieur your friend, Rosalie," he finished airily.

"Monsieur Tuharczin," interposed Henry with energy, "I think it may be as well for me to inform you now, first as last, that my relations with your wife have been those of perfect honor."

"Certainly, certainly!" returned the ex-aide-de-camp, with a smile. Then he turned to Rosalie and laid his unsteady hand on her arm. "Come, my adored one, do you not thirst to hear my story? Come, we will say good-night to monsieur, and detain him no longer." Still grasping the arm of his shrinking wife, he turned back to the speechless American. For the first time a flame of something like life crept into his lustreless eyes:

"Many thanks, monsieur, for your services to madame la Comtesse. But now that I myself am arrived to take care of my little runaway, we can relieve you of your responsibility. Though perhaps we may meet at the Casino—at the tables——"

"Thank you, monsieur," returned Livingston with resolution, "but I leave Aix at dawn to-morrow." He turned to Rosalie, who stood with bowed head. It seemed to him that with her proven lie, the spirit that he loved had flown; leaving the beautiful shape before him, so far as he was concerned, a corpse.

"Good-by, madame," he said.

"Good-by," she answered. Her husband drew her toward the stairs, and Henry Livingston went slowly back to his hotel.

X.

THOUGH when he came to execute his word, he was held back, like a prisoner by his ball and chain, by the same impediment as formerly: the million francs.

To be sure, he might send it to her. But now even more than

formerly he must feel an entire absence of warrant for its reaching her hands. For if ever he had read the word "scamp" written large on a human face, it was on the delicately chiselled features of the Comte Peter Tuharczin. That nobleman had, moreover, not scrupled to own it was the news of his wife's magnificent winnings that had caused him to pop up from the limbo in which he was sunk, and claim her again.

Henry raged at himself. He had told himself that with the discovery of her deceit his love had died. She had deceived him. The fact of her marriage was bad enough, but the insurmountable barrier lay in the fact that she had deliberately lied to him.

Then the pain of that disillusionment, however severe, was driven out by mere natural suffering. His yearning for the woman he loved rose to an anguish of passion. Rosalie's face, as he had beheld it through the mountain mists, red-lipped and clear-eyed, hung before him like a Medusa-head. He stood rigid. That face was now the property of another man, as it had been so nearly his. She was with him now, that sneering haggard Apollo! Was it sure, so unwillingly? He stared at the lighted windows opposite his own. One dreadful thought came constantly back to him, of the revolver beside the trunk where he kept the treasure. His soul was strong; but the whole force of his soul had gone into his love for the woman who had deceived him. It seemed to him that no strength was left in him with which to resist.

There was a knock at the door, and he went to open it. There at the threshold stood the Comtesse's femme-de-chambre, Thérèse.

"Close the windows," she whispered. With furious haste, he shut and fastened the long windows of the little sitting-room. Then he came back to her on the run. She stepped in and closed the door; then from the sleeve of her black wool dress she drew a tube of white rolled paper. He opened it and beheld the dinner menu of the Hôtel Splendide.

"The other side, monsieur," said Thérèse.

He turned it and read in blind pencil scratches:

Keep what is yours.

Send me ten thousand francs in a sealed envelope.

Don't leave Aix.

This was underlined, then repeated:

Don't leave Aix.

There was no signature, but in the lower corner was a final sentence written as by a hand that writes in the dark:

I lock my door to-night.

The blood swam to Livingston's hair. For a moment, so dreadful had been his previous despair, it seemed to him it was joy that he knew.

"I am to wait for monsieur's answer," said Thérèse stolidly.

Livingston hesitated a moment, then opened the door leading into his bedroom.

"Go in there and wait, Thérèse. You may close the shutters and light up, if you choose."

With a grim bow, the woman obeyed him. He paused, then softly turned the key in the communicating door, and adjusted the key so that no intrusive eye might spy upon his proceedings.

Very softly he unlocked the Saratoga trunk, then unlocked the motor trunk within. The black valise with its treasure was intact. With noiseless fingers, he selected notes to the amount of the sum asked, closed the various receptacles, and replaced the key on his ring. Then he snatched a pen from his desk. He had intended to write merely a line of calm reproach, of dignified farewell; but words of love, only, flowed from his pen—of tenderness, of infinite pity. Poor little thing! After all, her case was worse than his, for he was free. While she—— But even in her captivity, she refused to yield to her captor. Poor, brave, loyal little thing!

He finished his letter, enclosed the bank-notes, and sealed with his ring. Then he readmitted Thérèse. She seemed understanding, even sympathetic. "I choose my time for giving monsieur's letter to madame the Comtesse—hein? Is it not so?"

Livingston pressed a hundred-franc note upon her. Had it not been for the very real anguish of the moment, he might have felt himself the hero of a Parisian farce. "When madame is alone, yes—you understand!"

The woman replied with a look of such perfect intelligence that Livingston could no longer hold back from this chance of information. "It was a surprise for madame the Comtesse, this sudden arrival of monsieur the Comte—is it not so?"

"Of that, monsieur can be very sure. When I took service with madame in Paris—it was when her own femme-de-chambre had been taken ill with the homesickness and had to be sent back to their barbarous Servia—when I first met madame, she told me she was a widow. Monsieur the Comte, it seemed, had been killed in the royal palace at Belgrade, on that night when his king and queen were assassinated, five years ago. They were prettily dead, the king and queen; but, unfortunately, monsieur the Comte was bungled! The new king put him into prison and let him stay there, while all believed him dead. It is only a month that his uncle, finding that he still lived, paid a ransom to the new king and bought him out. So

then monsieur the Comte, seeing his wife's picture in the Paris papers, and hearing of her great success, came here out of the grave, as it were, to join her. That is all I know, monsieur. Monsieur has no further commands for me? Good-night, monsieur."

To Livingston, she passed like the vanishing of an angel. Her tidings, while not those of great joy, were of relief unspeakable. He had lost the woman he loved, but he had not lost his faith in her. However rashly she had acted, it had not been on her side a scheme of deceit. It was rather she herself who had been deceived by the chances of war, by the intrigues of a usurper, by the caprice of the roving adventurer. The adherent of a defeated cause had possibly been glad enough to snatch the shelter of his reported death. He had been gladder yet, when sudden fortune came to his wife, to rush back from the death to claim his share.

A few moments later Henry was called from his bedroom by the arrival of a telegram. It read:

Charmed to receive your fiancée. Wire arrival at Victoria.

E. WARRINGTON.

XI.

THE day following the return of the Comte Tuharczin was passed by Livingston in wondering, in suffering, in rowing furiously in the little fishing-skiff which he had rented upon the lake. In the evening, when he returned to the hotel, he found the stolid-faced Thérèse waiting for him. The message which she bore, though couched in a familiar handwriting, was brief:

Ten thousand francs.

The link, though sordid, was a tie that bound him to one dearly beloved and irrevocably lost. After due precautions, he counted out the money to Rosalie's messenger.

"There is no other message from madame the Comtesse?"

"No other, monsieur. But from something she said, I believe she expects to see monsieur at the Casino this evening. Monsieur the Comte is wild for the Red and Black."

With hands trembling in excitement, Livingston arrayed himself for the evening. It was at eleven o'clock, when the play was in full swing, that he entered the Casino. The Tuharczins stood together beside the table where Rosalie's early successes had been won. The Comte, who in this cosmopolitan watering-place had evidently run across some of his acquaintances, was the centre of an animated group. It was plain that he was prodigiously excited. His face was flushed to a mottled crimson, and his eyes had purple puffs beneath. Rosalie,

pale in her pink raiment, bent like a marble statue over the numbered squares of the table.

Suddenly the Servian's eyes, lifted across the table, picked out Livingston among the crowd. A look of hate passed like a spasm over the high-bred inanity of his face; then the look of vindictiveness died down, and he smiled languidly.

"Rosalie! There's our American friend. Monsieur! Monsieur! Come over here and give us luck!"

These words were surely the last that Livingston had expected to hear. Whether he had any business to obey the summons, he did not know. It was, however, difficult to disregard it. He bowed in assent and pushed his way about the table. The ex-aide-de-camp greeted him feverishly, with his eyes fixed upon the flying ball. Whatever might be his private jealousies and mistrusts, it was evident that for the moment all thought was swallowed up in his passion for the game. His delicate little hand shook; his eyes fairly started from his head in excitement as he drew a bundle of notes from his pocket-book and thrust them into Livingston's hand.

"The cards are against me to-night," he cried. "Sacred name of a rabbit, I've lost every stake—eight thousand francs already! My heart won't stand it—since that pestilent prison, my doctor forbids all excitement. Come, play! Win for me! Win for me!"

Henry rejected the money in disgust; whereat Tuharczin's face relaxed into a sudden leer of menace. Whatever might be the cause of his strange behavior, it was evident that the wine he had drunk played no inconsiderable part. And wine, which inflames all passions, had carried his thirst for gambling to a point that passed even his jealousy. But jealousy was still there, together with suspicion. Livingston saw that the making of an ugly scene lay on the tip of the little man's tongue, so for Rosalie's sake he yielded.

"As you wish, Comte. But I warn you, I take no responsibility. I am sure to lose it. And now, shall I play for you?"

"Yes, yes!" Tuharczin's eyes flamed in the anticipation of success. He looked like a man who, long denied the wild enjoyments that he loved, was resolved to profit to the utmost of their present superfluity.

Livingston, hedging, laid a thousand francs on the Red; the rest he laid on the number 7, and 10 in the centre. The Red lost. But the whirling ball flew, tossed, and entered 10. Tuharczin broke into a wild delirium of triumph.

In silent repulsion Livingston counted his winnings into the nobleman's trembling hands. Two thousand francs had gone on the color and the losing number; but, even so, the Servian's profit on the

transaction amounted to thirty-three thousand francs. His triumph possessed him like an insanity. Livingston found a moment to lean toward the Comtesse.

"Rosalie!" he whispered. She inclined her ear, without turning. He went on swiftly:

"Rosalie, this is no place for you. We have both done our best, but you must not stay with this man. When will you come with me?"

She paused a moment. They were sheltered by the wild hilarity that ringed them in. Smiling languidly at her fan, she answered in tones as soft and swift as his own:

"For me to go away with you so, would mean to make you an exile from your home—to ruin your life. I've been wicked, I know, but not so wicked as that!"

His heart closed in a contraction like that of death. "Was it to tell me this that you asked me to stay in Aix?"

"I was so weak. Forgive me. You must leave Aix."

"But your money?"

"It is yours."

"Rosalie, you must take it. To leave it with me is to expose me to degrading suspicions."

"Then I will send for it to-morrow."

"How shall I send it? The valise?"

"Yes."

"But that means danger!" he shuddered. "Remember the man with the bludgeon. Be sure, you are watched. Rosalie, I will send it to you in my trunk. Here, throw down a louis on the table. We mustn't be seen to talk together."

She turned to play, while Livingston's swift fingers detached the two little keys which at first he had worn about his neck, and now, with lessening suspicion, on his key-ring.

"Here they are. The keys of the big trunk and of the little trunk inside. I will lay them here, beneath your winnings."

The Comtesse Tuharczin swept up a hundred-franc note, and two tiny keys inside. Her husband turned back with a wild laugh. The flush had died from his face, leaving it deadly pale. His bright blue eyes, against the dark patches that ringed them, shone with the fire of one possessed.

"Come, monsieur," he cried, "play again!"

Livingston moved away. "No, Comte, my luck is gone. This time I'd only lose your money!"

"Ah, you refuse!" At Livingston's rebuff, the Servian's volatile triumph dissolved into sudden rage. "You will admit, monsieur, I have already shown you some forbearance!" He leered toward

his wife, then shook the notes in a rattling sheaf before Livingston's face.

"Million sacred thunders! You refuse to let me profit by your luck, as your friend. Do you, then, wish me for your enemy?"

Rosalie's eyes of mute despair were fixed on Livingston. She made a gesture which commanded "Go." Livingston turned hurriedly from the room, but not too hurriedly to see the whole sum that he had won for Tuharczin laid upon the Red, and swept away by the turn of the wheel to Black.

XII.

THE next day broke dark and heavy. Pale thunder-clouds brooded muttering over the hills, and the whole city felt their oppression. Livingston had made up his mind that this should be his last day in Aix. That night he would leave for Paris. Whether or not he would go alone, he did not know. But at least he would dangle no longer in this neighborhood.

With eagerness, he awaited her promised messenger. At noon came the close-lipped Thérèse. "It is a trunk, I believe, that I am to take to Madame. I have two porters below."

Livingston, surveying her harsh face, was seized with a sudden caution. Thérèse indeed seemed a model of discretion and seriousness; but a million francs, less a few thousands, was a powerful sum. Was he justified in handing over to this irresponsible agent the sum which probably represented the whole fortune of his beloved?

"Have you brought a receipt from your mistress, Thérèse?"

The maid surveyed him with an offended air. "I don't know what you are talking about, monsieur. I have n't come to demand payment for a bill. It is a trunk that madame mentioned!"

"She was right," Livingston mused. "But see here—I can't let it go this way, you understand."

"If monsieur doubts my honesty——" Thérèse began.

Livingston cut her short. "Not in the least. But business is business. Go back and tell your mistress that, if she will allow me, I will take the trunk to her myself. Otherwise I ask that she send a *sergent de ville*, and a receipt in her own hand—you understand?"

The woman stormed, insisted. Then, grumbling, departed. Livingston descended to his lunch, which he ate with little appetite. As he left the dining-room and went back through the vestibule of the hotel he saw, coming in at the door, a slender, dandified little figure, swinging a jaunty cane.

"Monsieur Livingston?" he heard his own name asked of the *portier*. He stepped forward and found himself face to face with the Comte Tuharczin.

The orgy of last night had left its marks. The Servian's handsome face was livid, but his eyes flamed with suppressed excitement. He wore the look of a man who has screwed himself up to meet a desperate moment.

"Monsieur, good morning! May I speak to you a moment on business?"

"With pleasure, Comte. Will you sit down?"

Tuharczin sank into a chair. Then he bent forward to the American.

"Monsieur, I come as my wife's messenger, to receive her property which you hold in trust. May I ask you to have the extreme goodness to hand it over to me?"

Livingston stared in astonishment. Was it possible that Rosalie, in her proven disdain of money, had appointed the irresponsible gamester before him as her new trustee? It was possible; but he could not yield his trust without further warrant.

"Certainly, monsieur. I suppose you bring from your wife a signed order authorizing me to turn over to you any property of hers which I may hold?"

Tuharczin went hurriedly through his pockets. "Name of a pipe! Now I remember there was a letter that Rosalie asked me to give to you. I seem to have lost it, but what does that signify? It is the property of my wife that I ask. Shall I call the porters, monsieur?"

"When you bring me the signed order and receipt from Madame Tuharczin, monsieur."

Livingston's curt reply brought a sudden dark flush into the haggard face before him.

"Monsieur, in your barbarous ignorance, you may be unaware that according to the laws of France a wife has no property rights except those vested in her husband. There was in our marriage contract no provision for the separation of goods. My wife's property is mine. I have information from her maid that you hold such property to the amount of one million francs, the sum which my wife won at the tables. Monsieur, this is my money that you withhold from me, and I demand justice!"

Tuharczin's voice was shrill, his exquisitely chiselled face was clenched like a fist in the intensity of his greedy desire. How much right the French law might attribute to his claim, Henry did not know, but he stood firm.

"How you obtained the information that Madame Tuharczin had placed any money in my hands is no concern of mine. Until I obtain release from my trust from the lady who confided it to me, I must decline to yield it."

Tuharczin jumped to his feet. His breath came short, and his intensity of rage seemed to move him to real physical distress.

"Camel!" he screamed. "German! You withhold from me the money that is my wife's, the money that is my own. You are trying to steal my money, as you have already stolen my wife. But I'll have justice if there are laws in France! Thief! Thief!" And, raising himself on tiptoe, he struck with his cane full at the American's face. Livingston snatched his wrist, jerked away the cane, laid it in a single blow across his opponent's shoulder, then flung it away. Tuharczin, with a gasp, sank blue-lipped and shaking into a convenient chair.

About them the foyer was in an uproar. The proprietor bustled about in distraction. Tuharczin, prostrate and coughing in his chair, shook his fist at his foe.

"I'll have satisfaction for this! I'm a soldier, you forget that, sacred pig of a red-skin! Coward! Coward!"

"I'm at your service, Comte Tuharczin, when and where you please," returned Livingston fiercely. "I shall be here at this hotel till to-morrow, if you choose to send me your witnesses. After that, here is my banker's address in Paris, which will find me at any time." And he flung his card to the figure of impotent rage that shook in the chair before him, and strode away.

Livingston's fury soon died out. He only felt sick and sorry and sad. The thought of Rosalie in the power of the man he had just left was one that weighed on him like a nightmare. It seemed to him now that the sin would not be to persuade her to leave the creature to whom she was tied, but to go away and leave her behind. In all the dark whirl of his thoughts, he saw one bright spot: Rosalie's love for him. But over this lay a threatening shadow: her deep religious faith. In spite of her enigmatic utterances on the subject, he himself had witnessed her deep devotion to a church that admits no divorce. And to think of Rosalie Tuharczin in a relation that pointed to anything but marriage, in a situation that should lower that proud purity before the world, was to think an impossible thing.

These were the thoughts that followed him that afternoon, as he rowed in his little fishing-skiff. The clouds were still oppressive, and shook threatening drops upon the surface of the lake. Livingston, lost in his bitter thoughts, took no notice of the heavy air. Soul and body seemed one numb, twanging ache together.

He thought of the quarrel of an hour before. Would the Servian swallow the blow in silence, or would he pluck up the courage to give Livingston the chance to kill him? The American's blood rose in grim joy at the thought. He pulled up his skiff at the further side of the lake, and spent an hour in pistol practice.

When his cartridges were exhausted he returned to his boat. As he pushed her off, his free oar swung and caught in his watch-chain. A little locket attached there snapped its frail fastening and fell tinkling to the bottom of the boat. He snatched it up and pressed it tenderly to his tanned and shaven cheek. It was the locket with her portrait in it, that Rosalie had given him on the day of the betrothal. Because it contained the portrait of her husband as well as of herself, Livingston had never opened it since that day.

As he picked it up, he felt a sudden spasm of contempt for his own weakness. In how absurd a position did he place himself, to be carrying about the portrait of a little cad like Tuharczin—merely because he could not bear the momentary sight of his simpering features side by side with those of Rosalie. With resolution, he opened the little enamelled trifle, shut his eyes, and crushed the right-hand glass with his thumb.

His reward for this audacity was a sharp twinge and a warm trickle of blood. The photograph beneath the broken glass stuck fast in the rim of the locket. Livingston opened his eyes, and attacked the locket with his uninjured thumb.

But his hand was arrested with his breath, his eyes were riveted. For the face which he beheld in miniature beside that of Rosalie, the face she had declared to be that of her husband, was not the fair, exquisitely chiselled countenance of the dissipated little *boulevardier* who had appeared so unexpectedly. The face was that of a man older and sterner, with high cheek-bones, a prominent jaw, and a brush of black hair; a man who wore the uniform of a cavalry officer, and who might more readily be supposed to answer to the barbaric syllables of his Slavonic name than the little Boulevard dandy who had claimed it.

Livingston reeled. The boat rocked sideways, and he came near to falling. A clutch at the gunwale saved him, and he sat down with the elaborate care of the half-dazed. The low-hanging thunder rumbled among the hills, and a faint breeze drove the skiff slowly sideways. Livingston sat with his head between his hands, trying to piece together the facts unfolded by the face which looked up from his hand.

It was the face of the man whom Rosalie Tuharczin, in bestowing her betrothal gift upon him, had stated to be her husband. The week following she had accepted an entirely different person as her husband.

If her first story was true, it was plain that the new-comer was not the Comte Tuharczin at all. And if not, by what power had he forced so proud a woman to abet his masquerade? One thing is certain: it is not over an innocent woman that a blackmailer has

power. What could be the silence which a woman would be willing to buy at such a price?

But if, after all, his late opponent was the veritable Comte Peter Tuharczin of Belgrade, then who was this other man?

Twist the facts as he would, believe one story or the other, Rosalie had lied to him. He had been frank with her; some men might think quixotically so. He had offered her his best and his all, as to a woman known and respected by all his world; and she had requited him like a woman whom it is not necessary to respect.

He stuffed the betraying trinket into his pocket, seized his oars, and pulled full speed for the landing. It seemed to him insupportable that he should spend even another hour in Aix.

XIII.

At the garage, however, an unpleasant surprise awaited him. Théophile, who had sent to Paris for a new set of sparking-plugs, reported that they had not yet arrived. Beyond a doubt, they would be on the Paris-to-Rome *rapide*, which stopped at Aix at nine o'clock. This must mean a start delayed until to-morrow morning. This in the present unpromising state of the weather was a disappointment to be borne with philosophy. And besides, he was in honor bound to wait for the challenge of the Comte Tuharczin—if Tuharczin the little man really was.

As he entered his hotel, he stopped for one instant to give notice of his approaching departure. The desk was empty, the *gérant* was nowhere to be seen. Livingston shrugged his shoulders, threaded his way through the crowded foyer, and went upstairs.

Once arrived there, he was overtaken with sudden doubt. This decision to remain overnight in Aix threw on his hands the time he had intended to use for packing. He glanced at his watch; five o'clock just gone. What should he do with the dreary moments till dinner-time? At the far end of the corridor the door of the reading-room stood open. At this hour it was empty; and perhaps the newspapers of all countries might serve to distract his thoughts.

Slowly he passed by his own door and entered the cool and shadowy reading-room. As he had expected, it was quite deserted. He gathered the files of newspapers, flung himself into a large chair, and tried to read.

But the pages danced before his eyes. The face in the locket, and the face that had mocked him this very morning—these two, with the dreadful doubt they entailed, swam like a hideous question-mark before his eyes. What was the relation of these two men to the woman who had sworn to him that her past and future were alike his,

and his alone? There among the solitude of the newspapers he sat and suffered miserably. He turned with a snarl like that of a sick animal when suddenly, as the clocks were striking six, the *portier* from below came bustling in to seek a railroad-guide.

"Ah, monsieur! How long has monsieur been here?"

"Since five o'clock."

"Ah! Monsieur has not yet been to his room?"

"Not yet."

"Then monsieur had not been informed there is a caller for monsieur?"

Fierce satisfaction leaped into Henry's mind. Had Tuharczin come—or sent his second?

"No; who is it?"

"Madame the Comtesse Tuharczin. She came a half-hour ago, and was shown upstairs to monsieur's apartment."

At the sound of the beloved name, at the thrilling idea of the beloved presence so near to him, his tortured soul was aware of nothing but its own joy. He leaped to his feet.

"And she has been kept waiting all this time? What damnable stupidity!"

One breathless moment sufficed to bring Henry to his apartment. He threw himself with eagerness upon the door. To his surprise, it resisted him. He knocked. There was an instant's pause, then a light fall of feet. Poor girl, how long had she been kept waiting? And how cruelly the precious moments had been wasted! The key was turned in the lock. He flung the door open and rushed into the room with outstretched hands.

Against the quadrangle of purple-black sky framed by the open window stood a strange figure. It was Rosalie, deadly white and dressed in a scarlet costume that marked the apotheosis of her new gaudiness in attire. For a moment she and her lover stood regarding each other in silence.

He waited for her to speak. But the strained exaltation of her mood, from whatever cause, seemed to match his own. She stepped toward him and her lips moved; but no sound came. She lifted her hand to her face and spoke from behind it.

"Henri," she said, "I'm free!"

This news, which a few hours ago would have moved him to a delirious delight, now touched him only with a profound sadness.

"I wish you had told me earlier, Rosalie," he said; "for now, you see, I've found out for myself."

Beneath the calm sternness of his eyes the woman shuddered in a helpless suffering that touched his heart.

"Let me stay one moment, one moment only, Henri," she said

with a strange humility. Then the pale flame leaped again into her eyes. "What have you found out," she breathed in a little strangling voice, "and how?"

"Madame, you tell me that you are free. I reply that I know it already. I know that the man whom you have received here as your husband is not your husband at all."

She continued to stare at him for one tense instant; then, sinking into a chair, she covered her face with her hands and broke into a gust of hysterical sobbing. Her tears wrung Henry's heart. In sudden relenting he stooped to comfort her, when her next speech arrested him.

"Is that all?" she said.

The flippancy of her words, if not of her accent, smote him painfully.

"Oh, Rosalie, if you had only told me more—more, that I might believe!" he cried in sad bitterness. "First you tell me that your husband is dead. He appears on the eve of our marriage. Then I stumble on facts which make it doubtful whether he is your husband at all. Your words, your silence, admit it. I discover traces of another man——"

Suddenly, from the expression of her face, he observed that his words were falling on deaf ears. The eyes were wide open, the pupils distended to cover the entire iris with their glistening black. The whole slim figure, in its flaunting costume, wore an expression strained, yet wild, as of one listening for some unseen signal.

A lightning flash filled the twilight room. She started violently. "Hark!" she said. She glared about the room with those strange eyes that seemed to search for something unseen. The thunder rumbled about the encircling hills. In a sudden relenting that rose from the deepest springs of his nature, Livingston leaped toward the beloved figure. She stepped back and flung out two slim hands with a force which struck his chest like a cut cable.

"Don't touch me!" she panted. "You don't know what you touch!"

While choice seemed open to him, Henry had been in doubt what he wanted. Now that her unexpected repulsion removed choice, doubt flared away like kindled tow. He wanted her. He loved her. Beside that love, doubts and scruples were as shadows.

"Rosalie, my darling! Rosalie, listen to me!"

"No, I must go!" Her voice rose to a hysterical scream, and she regarded him with haunted eyes. "You despise me, I know. But I love you—I love you. There's that much good in me, any way!"

"Then why do you leave me?" cried Livingston.

She shuddered like one in physical agony. The sight of her

distress, provoked by his own accusation, disarmed his indignation like the weeping of a hurt child. An hour ago his judgment had cast her out as a woman who by her own act had ceased to exist for him. Now it seemed to him that he existed only for the purpose of comforting the wound that he himself had made.

"My darling, the past is wiped out. Let us build up the future together."

"No, no—you must wait, you must reflect! I will take no advantage of a moment's impulse, because you see me in pain. Later, if you decide it to be best, you may come to me. But now let me take that horrible money of mine that I forced on you, and let me go."

"But it's raining. The storm is beginning to break."

"As though that mattered! Will you call porters for me, please?"

"Dearest, where are you going?"

"I don't know. Away from Aix, by the first train. But I will send for you, if you want to come—I swear it by the good God, Henri!" Her voice rose shrill above the rattle of the thunder. Her slim hands seized his arms in a grip that seemed to stop the blood. "I love you," she cried, with her eyes flaming close to his. "Whatever you hear, don't forget that! But if I stay here another moment with you, I shall die. Henri, if you have any love for me, or any pity for me, send for the men and let me go!"

He sprang to the bell and gave the three strokes that called for the desired servants. He turned back to her. The wind sighed in the street without, and the dry claps of thunder were almost continuous. Rosalie's dress, in the blue lightning flashes, appeared a deep violet. Her white face, since the bell-pulling which assured her the speedy accomplishment of her will, was relaxed from the wild intensity of its strain. Very gently she took Livingston's head between her two hands, drew it down, and kissed him on the forehead. Her touch was like that of a flower. He felt the tears start to his eyes.

"You are good," she said. "You are my saint, and I will pray to you. Even when you judge me, you will remember that, won't you? For I love you so, my Henri—you see, I love you so!"

The porters knocked at the door. Henry admitted them, and indicated the trunk. They groaned at its size, and groaned still louder at its weight. With an anxious care that was oddly at variance with her former indifference, Rosalie clung to the side of her solidly clumping treasure. "Be careful!" she said to the men. "Be careful!"

Livingston, who had looked forward with such eagerness to his relief from this unasked trust, viewed its final departure with a strangely sinking heart. The disappearing of the treasure-trunk seemed the severing of the last link with the dearly-loved woman before

him. "Rosalie," he said as he followed her down the stair-case, "Rosalie——"

"Yes, Henri?"

"You'll let me know as soon as you're settled?"

"I will."

"But Tuharczin?"

"When I last saw him, it was his intention to leave to-night for Paris."

"Madame! If Madame will permit——"

It was the porters with their little cart outside.

"You may take that trunk to the station at once," Rosalie told them. "It's to go by the nine o'clock train."

The men departed through the thunderous twilight of the street, and Rosalie turned to Livingston. "No further, Henri. We must say good-by here," she said, and gave him her hand.

In spite of the bystanders, he clung to it. "Rosalie, I can't let you go like this. You are worn-out—you are ill! It's all my fault—I was too harsh with you. Now let me go with you, only to take care of you, poor little child. Let me go as your brother——"

She withdrew her hand with a firm gesture. "No, Henri, you know for yourself it is impossible. Within the week I will send for you. And when you come, you may judge for yourself. But on this journey I go alone."

She turned suddenly and sped like a slim scarlet flame across the dusky twilight of the street. The next moment the door of the Splendide swallowed her up.

XIV.

HENRY LIVINGSTON dressed, ate an early dinner, and strolled over to the Casino. He had some hopes of seeing his opponent of the morning. It would be some satisfaction, he told himself, to arrange for that meeting when he might use the little beast as his target, or, if he refused, to pull his dainty little nose for him. Tuharczin, however, was nowhere to be seen.

In avoiding the Casino on this night of lowering tempest, the rest of Aix was for the most part of the Comte's opinion. The opera-house was sparsely filled, the croupiers jerked their levers to almost empty tables.

For a half-hour Henry wandered miserably about the Casino, then suddenly made up his mind to bear it no longer. He would go home, pack, and go immediately to sleep, for an early start in the morning. Aix was not to be borne another day—he would make a circling trip in the mountain-country about it, keeping in constant telegraphic

touch with the Hôtel des Etrangers. When Rosalie's word came he would be ready on the road to fly straight to her.

Three minutes sufficed to whirl Livingston home to his hotel. He gave Théophile orders for an early start, and entered the vestibule. At the foot of the stairs he came face to face with a young Englishman, an acquaintance of the Casino, who had that morning announced to Livingston his intention of leaving Aix to-night.

"Here you are still! Good! So you did n't go, after all?"

The other made a gesture of resignation. "What do you expect a night like this? Drove to the station with my traps—found their confounded schedule all gone to smash! They say there's a steel bridge struck by lightning in the mountains just to the north of us. South-bound trains can't get through, north-bound trains held up at Modane. Confound it, did you ever see such a devil of a night?"

Livingston did not reply. His heart leaped. The train service had stopped, therefore Rosalie Tuharczin must still be in Aix.

Undecided as to what to do, Livingston sought his apartments and attempted to turn on his electric light. It refused to respond. Suddenly he realized that the city was dark. This confounded thunderstorm, of course, had cut off the current. Cursing it heartily, he fumbled for the bell. The bell, being also electric, was dead as the lights; the passing moments yielded no response of approaching feet. Livingston, whose jangled nerves were by this time worked to something resembling rage, groped his way to the lift-shaft and shouted for candles.

A pair in candlesticks were presently brought by an apologetic valet. Livingston, ordinarily the most good-natured of men, glared at him. "Why the devil could n't you have them ready in the room?" He seized one and turned toward his bedroom. His foot slipped. Looking down at the floor, he noticed glistening splotches, as if the floor had been just washed. Livingston's irritation grew.

"Look here, my man, are you the person that takes care of this room?"

"Yes, monsieur."

"Then why the devil do you take the middle of the afternoon for mopping up my floor? And when you've spilled the water about, why don't you wipe it up?"

The man started. "No, monsieur," he answered hastily; "I have not washed the floor of monsieur's room to-day."

"Then, will you kindly find out who did?" returned Livingston, in strong annoyance at the man's evident untruth. "If you can't find out for me who is at the bottom of the wretched service in this hotel, then I shall certainly complain of you to the proprietor."

The man slunk off. Livingston, whose good-natured soul smote him almost immediately for his harshness, took a candle in his hand and turned to his bedroom to do his packing.

Here was some awkwardness; for his motor trunk, with Rosalie's gold enclosed, had gone off inside the Saratoga. But still he had his suit-case. He entered his bedroom, resolved to make amends for his bad temper by an additional gratuity to the valet in the morning.

The sight of his bedroom, however, melted his kindly resolution into thin air. The Etrangers, whose service had never been too good, was certainly growing impossible. His bed had not even been made. It had, in fact, been stripped for the laundry, and nothing replaced. The bare mattress confronted him. This time he turned in a very real rage. The valet was just reëntering the door.

"Monsieur, I have spoken to the other valets and chambermaids on this floor. No one has washed the floor of monsieur's room to-day."

"And neither has any one made monsieur's bed or given him ordinary decent attention," returned Livingston with severity. "It is a strange time to choose for neglecting your patrons, on the day before their departure! I have found two of my rooms in absolute disorder. Now let me look at the third." He turned to his bathroom. "As I thought," he observed. "The wet sponges are still in the tub, and not a towel to be seen! Do you call this attention?"

"But I assure monsieur——" began the man vociferously.

Livingston cut him short. "The facts assure monsieur otherwise. Now go to work and put my room in proper condition, and let me hear no more of your excuses for this outrageous neglect!"

Suddenly his ear was caught by the whirl of machinery in the forsaken street below. He turned eagerly to the window. Before the hotel opposite him an automobile had come to a sudden stop. By the light of the flaring lamps he saw a slender figure clad in a black travelling dress. A short, square shape followed. An instant later they had disappeared within the hotel, and the motor whirled away around the corner. Two minutes elapsed, while Henry's heart beat fast. Then the lights flickered up in the windows opposite his own. In one instant's flare of candle-light, he saw a well-known fair face for one moment at the window. Now at last there could be no doubt: Rosalie Tuharczin, bound in Aix by the wreck of the railway bridge, had returned to pass this stormy night at her old hotel.

Soon after, in the emptiness of the street below, sounded the dry rattle of wheels. The yellow gas-light, flaring from the door of the Splendide, showed Henry a horse and cart, driven by two men. A second glance showed him that one of the men was the outside porter

of the afternoon; and that the sole freight of the cart was a familiar trunk.

Suddenly a lightning flash cut the darkness and his breath with it. It was evident that the Comtesse Tuharczin, far from losing sight of her million francs for the night, would not willingly let it leave her eye for an instant. There upon her balcony she stood, still in her black travelling dress, and with her face bent rigidly down to the street beneath. A black fan, waving slowly in her hand, was the only motion of her statue-like figure.

In the street below there seemed to be some difficulty in handling the huge trunk. The horse, distracted with fear of the storm, pawed restively. The men made free the trunk, with a rattle of falling chains, and shouted for extra help from the hotel.

Then came a gust that rattled the shutters and filled the air with the dry smell of dust. Through the half-lit shadows of the night, Livingston saw the sudden bending of the shadowy figure on the balcony opposite, and its arms outflung after something that whirled away into the dark. The lightning flared and lit to sudden flame the flashing spangles of a wind-borne fan. Past the horse's head the eddying gust swept it like a trail of fire. The animal, already nervous, plunged in sudden terror. The cart swerved. There was a shout, an instant's silence, then the heavy crash of a trunk upon the paved street.

"The devil!" said Livingston in extreme disgust. "They've gone and done it now, the clumsy asses!" He glanced across. The shadowy figure had disappeared as if by magic from the balcony, and the windows were shut.

Torches flared below. He could see the trunk, still intact. Then a voice rose up, harsh yet clear:

"Name of a name!"

Another hush. Then another voice answered, in a whisper that cut the wind:

"Sacred name of the sacred name of God!"

Livingston's heart stood still. What sudden discovery called up such words as these? Did the golden coins lie scattered in the street? His straining eyes could show him nothing. But the crowd below the window grew. His first impulse was to run down and join them. Then he remembered that the gold, instead of being loose in the big trunk, was enclosed in an automobile trunk of solid leather. Whatever accident might befall the outside shell, the inner trunk would keep the treasure safe. The men's exclamations were merely the expression of their natural alarm at the idea of paying for the piece of luggage that was doubtless ruined by their carelessness.

The valet, who had finished the neglected chamber-work, was just

leaving the room with his broom and mop. Livingston delayed him. "Here, *garçon*, pull out my valise for me, will you? And lay out my clothes upon the bed."

The man brightened. "Is it his trunk that monsieur wants? His trunk of automobile?"

"No, I've had that sent on to Paris, along with my big one. It's my valise that I mean."

"Monsieur's valise, yes. It is in the wardrobe." Eager to show his slighted intelligence, the man darted into the bedroom and returned with Livingston's American suit-case. "Here is the valise of monsieur. But as to the trunk, is not monsieur mistaken? It is in the bedroom."

Livingston stared in an irritation that was strained nearly to breaking-point. "What are you talking about? That motor trunk is gone with the big one."

"If monsieur will come and see for himself——" The man was politely insistent. Livingston strode impatiently after him.

"Here, monsieur, under the bed. As I made it, I stumbled against the trunk."

Livingston stooped to follow the pointing finger with his eyes. Sure enough, the guttering candle showed far beneath the bed a familiar shape of brass-nailed leather. His heart quivered in a little shock of perplexity. What did this mean?

"Shall I pull it out for monsieur?" asked the man.

Livingston made a gesture of dismissal. "You are right. I had forgotten this trunk. I will pack it myself. You may go now."

The valet, glad to escape, vanished through the door. Livingston stood still in the shock of a sudden thought. Was it possible that Rosalie, anxious to take no unnecessary advantage of his offered favor, had with her own hands emptied her treasure from the inner trunk into the single receptacle of the Saratoga. He started in sudden foreboding. If the two hundredweight of coin, with no other protection but that damaged valise, were loose in the big trunk at the time of its fall, then the excitement that continued unabated under his window was very thoroughly explained.

He sprang to the window. A sheet of rain that was like a waterfall struck him full in the face. The long delayed storm had burst from the clouds at last. In the street below, the murmuring uproar changed into a wild shout. The torches were extinguished as by a wave. Black forms scattered in every direction, seeking shelter. Beneath the porte-cochère he could perceive the dark outlines of the trunk, with a policeman standing beside it. The treasure, at any rate, was safe for the moment. With a strong effort, he slammed his windows to, against the driving rain.

To seek the street in a waterspout like this was absurd. Besides, what was there for him to do? His business was to attend to his packing, simplified by Rosalie's thoughtfulness in leaving him his motor trunk. Her kindness, which had turned to her own disadvantage, should not be left wholly profitless. He reached his arm under the bed to pull out the empty trunk.

To his surprise, it refused to move. The valet's words came back to him. They were true: the trunk was oddly heavy. Bracing his muscles, he jerked it out. A little key, laid on top of it, fell ringing to the floor. He picked it up. How had it come there? With an odd sensation, he fitted it to the lock of the trunk and turned. An instant later he raised his candle over the open trunk. There below his eyes was the bursting black valise, and the bottom of the trunk was lined with shining gold.

Henry Livingston was conscious of an odd movement in his throat. Rosalie Tuharczin had apparently carried off her money in his trunk, before his very eyes; yet there her money lay, the shining cash treasure whose payment had broken the bank of the prosperous Aix Casino. She had taken it off with her. Yet here it lay.

He was not imaginative, yet he shuddered faintly. Were his senses deluding him? He stooped and touched the shining mass before him. The coins ran clinking through his fingers. Clearly, there were forces at work here that he did not understand. By what secret agent had this treasure been conveyed back to his room?

Turn where he would, he met nothing but mystery. Whence had come this key, laid so precisely on top of the trunk? But if the trunk was left behind on purpose, why was it so carefully hidden under the bed? But for the accident that had called upon the valet to make his bed so late, he would have left Aix in the morning, ignorant of the treasure over which he had slept. Had Rosalie intended that he should not find it at all? And even granting her strange distaste for money, which perhaps had led her to take this odd safeguard against his forcing her property upon her, the question remained to haunt him:

What was in that trunk which the two porters, groaning, had carried away for the Comtesse Tuharczin this afternoon?

There was a knock at the door—a knock oddly loud and imperative. A voice spoke with it:

"Open, in the name of the law!"

Livingston started and stared. Was his door mistaken for that of some other and less innocent guest? Or was the knock at some other door in the corridor, sounding near-by by reason of its loudness? But the second knock was unmistakable. The panels quivered with it. Again the harsh voice spoke:

"Open, in the name of the law!"

This time Livingston jumped in good earnest. With swift caution, he closed the trunk and pushed it beneath the bed. But the key—where was the key? Outside the window, the thunder rolled through the storm, but it echoed in Henry's ears less thunderously than the final knock.

"Open, in the name of the law!"

He sprang to the door, unlocked and opened it. On the threshold stood two *sergents de ville*, dark-uniformed and bristling. The taller held a paper in his hand.

"You made us wait, monsieur," he observed with frigid majesty.

"Monsieur," returned Henry with equal coldness, "I beg your pardon. In what way can I serve you?"

The official brushed his question away with magisterial sternness.

"You are Monsieur Henry Livingston, monsieur?"

"I am."

The policeman turned with a sign to his companion. Behind them Henry saw a vista of crowding faces. Without another word, the two men pushed their way into the room, closed the door, and locked it. There was in their gestures a strangely ominous quality that held Henry from the vanity of anger.

"May I ask, messieurs, what this means?"

"We must search your room, monsieur. You will have the goodness to stand where you are."

"Ah!"

A flash of understanding shot through Livingston's brain. The treasure—that confounded treasure was what they were looking for, of course. Rosalie's trick of the afternoon had been a mere blind, to throw her husband off the track; but Tuharczin had fathomed the ruse, and struck in a final desperate effort to lay his hands upon the fortune he so furiously coveted. It was the Comte Tuharczin, the greedy little cad who dared not fight, who had run in terror to hide himself from his opponent—it was he that had set these watch-dogs of the law upon the American. Henry resolved that the prize should not be yielded with a struggle.

"You come on the complaint of the Comte Peter Tuharczin, messieurs?"

The policemen regarded him through narrowed eyes of suspicion, but vouchsafed no answer to the question.

"You may wait, monsieur, while we search your apartment."

One policeman stood by the locked door. The other cast a hasty glance about the room, then slid into the bedroom. Henry heard the noise of opening drawers and slamming wardrobe doors. Outside, the wind cried and the rain beat about the casements.

"I have it!" shouted a hoarse voice from the bedroom. Then the searcher appeared, dragging the motor trunk, which bumped and chinked heavily upon the floor. The other jumped to meet him with a shout of triumph. They jerked open the lid and bent two awed heads over the shining richness within.

"That money," interposed Henry with authority, "is the property of the Comtesse Rosalie Tuharczin. She entrusted it to me, and it is to her only that I deliver it."

"It comes with us, monsieur."

"But I cannot let it leave me."

"You also will come with us, monsieur!"

There was that in the man's voice that made Henry spring forward. "What do you mean?"

"Monsieur knows what I mean. But perhaps he does not know what happened just now to the trunk that left his room this afternoon?"

"It fell from the cart. I saw it."

"A corner of it was broken. Monsieur knows what we saw through the broken corner."

Curiosity flamed up in Henry's mind even higher than his anger.

"I do not know. Tell me!"

"We saw——"

"What?"

"The hand of a dead man."

There was a pause. Livingston stood like marble. The locked door of the afternoon and Rosalie's white face behind it; the disordered state of his apartment; the trunk which was emptied of its contents and yet went heavy away. He remembered how she had shrunk away from his offered embrace. "You don't know what you touch!" she had cried. He knew now.

For one instant the room reeled around him. He felt the policeman's hand on his shoulder, and the next moment something cold slipped on his wrist.

"It is with infinite regret that I inform you, monsieur, in the name of the French Republic: you are arrested for the murder of the Comte Peter Tuharczin!"

XV.

THERE is no need to recount the dimensions to which grew popular excitement over the Tuharczin murder mystery. The international quality of the case, the conspicuous social standing of the persons concerned, the atrocious nature of the crime itself—all these things assured a greedy thrill of excitement in the two greatest continents of the world.

In Europe the public eye was riveted upon the lady whose beauty had furnished the motive power for the whole ghastly affair. She was a Frenchwoman of noble birth, married to a sprig of Servian nobility, whom she had deserted. Her recent world-startling feat of breaking the bank at Aix had recoiled like a boomerang upon her, in giving to her husband the clue by which to trace her. He had turned up like Nemesis in Aix, shattering the romance between her and her wealthy American adorer. The latter's mad devotion to her had been the talk of the famous watering-place; as was also the rage of his disappointment. In the foyer of his own hotel he had pulled the nose of the detested husband—he had half strangled him, he had challenged him to a duel with pistols, with swords, or with both at once, in the American manner. Before the desperate assaults of the infuriated Red-skin, the little Comte had fled in terror. He had refused to meet his rival. Whereupon the American had hit him upon the head like an ox of his own Chicago, had doubled the dead body up into a trunk, and shipped it off with the Comtesse herself. Here, however, came the one ugly feature of this delicious *crime passionnel*. Had Monsieur Livingston informed Madame Tuharczin what it was she was carrying off in that trunk, or had he allowed her to think it was something very different?

In America, on the other hand, it was not so much the romance of the affair as the personality of the accused that claimed public attention. The idea of a Livingston, one of the Livingstons, being indicted for murder was enough to send a thrill through every private home and every boarding-house from Eastport to Los Angeles. Had it been in the United States, the event would have been thrilling enough; but in a foreign country! The possibility of the guillotine coming down on an American neck was one that provoked an outburst of national feeling. All over the country enthusiasts were writing to their Congressmen, urging a special session at Washington for the purpose of taking up the Livingston affair.

The government at Washington contented itself with sending a special note on the subject to the American ambassador at Paris. And a few days later the Department of Justice announced the concession of an unprecedented departure from custom: as a guarantee to international faith, the Livingston trial was to be open to the world.

The newspapers of the great capitals, seeing their one and only chance to make copy of a French murder trial, had their best correspondents packed and off before the announcement of the open trial was set in the forms. Though, owing to the near approach of the Assizes for the department of La Savoie, barely three weeks elapsed between the arrest of the accused and his trial, all the chief New

York newspapers had their special correspondents on the spot when the day arrived. London and Paris were even earlier in placing their representatives.

Day by day, with all the elaboration of surmise and detail that the ablest pens in the profession could provide, the press of the world received its news from Aix; and printed it under headlines that were worthy of the matter beneath:

BODY OF SERVIAN NOBLE FOUND IN TRUNK OF AMERICAN
MILLIONAIRE. THE VICTIM'S BEAUTIFUL WIFE CARRIES
IT OFF AMONG HER LUGGAGE. STRANGE SILENCE OF
THE ACCUSED.

For here was one of the most baffling features of an already baffling case: the accused American, even with his own lawyers, obstinately refused to open his mouth. To the *juge d'instruction*, preparing the case for the Court of Assizes, Livingston refused to return any answer. Indictment for wilful murder was found and drawn up; his lawyers came down from Paris, the day of trial approached, yet the accused man's silence remained unbroken. Telegrams, cables from English-speaking sympathizers, letters from every department in France, poured in with advice, with commands, with various solutions of the mystery. Every day came from New York a cable from Livingston *père*, held at home by sudden illness. The son's grief at these communications was obvious, but he held his tongue.

The outlook for the accused was black enough. The government witnesses formed a small army. The evidence which they offered was entirely circumstantial; but mesh by mesh it formed a net that threatened to tangle the accused to his own destruction.

For the defense, on the other hand, there was a pitiful barrenness of support. His bankers in Paris sent a representative to attest to his high moral character and social standing; but that was all. Livingston himself refused to open his mouth in his own defense. If his silence were, as some declared, in defense of the lady, then his devotion was ill-requited. For from her came not a word. Here was the strangest feature, perhaps, of this strange case. On the very evening of the murder, the Comtesse Tuharczin had disappeared.

What had become of her, in that night of thunder and rain? Owing to the accident to the line, no trains were running out of Aix. Her automobile stood in its garage. In the horror of her lover's crime, in the certain knowledge of his destruction, had she made way with herself? The lake was dragged; but mountain waters are bottomless. Alive or dead, no trace of that fair body was found. The most talked-of woman in the civilized world was gone—wiped off the face of human life, like a melting snowflake.

XVI.

THE incident of Livingston's arrest, horrifying as it was, had not profoundly impressed him. It was the revelation that had preceded it. In his room, that very day, his enemy, Peter Tuharczin, had met his death.

About the central horror of this fact the baffling incidents of the afternoon grouped themselves with a kind of dreadful precision. Livingston understood now the cause of the strange disorder of his room, of the ghastly face which Rosalie on his entrance had turned to him. He knew now the meaning of those words to which he had given quite another interpretation—"Henri, I'm free!" He knew now why the weight of that trunk, though emptied of its ostensible contents, had taxed the strength of two men.

Rosalie was a murderess!

The wild exhilaration of the thought that for his sake the crime had been committed thrilled through his blood at first in a kind of savage madness. In his thought, he had often compared her with one of the warrior women of old; and now she had justified his thought by sweeping aside the obstacle to her love, as Britomart or Fredegonda might have done. How small a thing was his life to offer in return for such a love as this! He resolved that by no word or no admission of his should that dear head be brought into peril. Whatever had been her mistakes or her sins, by the splendor of her crime she had vindicated them.

Even when he was confronted with the body of his supposed victim, he maintained his outward aspect of stolid silence.

Two days later his lawyers arrived from Paris: an American, Martin by name, known as the keenest head among the English-speaking practitioners of Paris; and a French criminal lawyer of great reputation, by the name of Dujardin. Martin was to prepare the case, Dujardin was to plead. They were both intensely interested in the business, hopeful of acquittal. The silence with which they met confounded them. Their client, while declining to admit his guilt, refused also to affirm his innocence. Not only that, but he refused to give any explanations of the affair; he refused even to give any account of his movements on that day of the murder.

The days dragged by till the time arrived when the Court of Assizes for the Department of La Savoie met in Aix-les-Bains. Five days more were passed in clearing the calendar of the earlier cases upon it. Finally the morning dawned when the eyes of the whole newspaper-reading world were riveted upon Aix-les-Bains; and Henry Livingston, stockbroker and *rentier*, of the city of New York, was to answer for the murder of Peter Tuharczin of Belgrade.

XVII.

IN a small antechamber adjoining the great hall of the Palace of Justice, Henry Livingston stood waiting between two gendarmes. The day was broiling hot, the room was airless. The drops stood out on his forehead. Three weeks of a French prison had blanched the tan of the open road from his face. His cheeks were hollow, and his eyes were fixed in a steady stare straight before him. In the poise of his shoulders, in the lift of his chin, there was the same steadiness; though the tensility of his muscles showed this composure to be the result rather of fixed resolution than of hope.

The door was suddenly flung open, and the sheriff, with whose face Livingston was already familiar, advanced.

"Henri Vane Livingston!"

Between his two guardians, and preceded by this last official, the prisoner advanced into the Hall of Justice. His first impression was of heat, of human faces, and of the foetid air which struck him in the face like a blow. Though the windows here and there stood open, the August air was motionless.

"Sit down!" said the sheriff.

Henry started indignantly, then remembered that his business was to obey. Accordingly, he sat down on a small wooden chair directly in front of the door by which he entered. The door was closed behind him. He faced the court room.

For the first moment his brain, dulled by the heat and by the strain of his situation, took in only the exterior details of the scene before him: the ornate, dingy hall, with its antique splendor of ceiling and its shabby dimness of walls and of furnishings; the whispering lawyers, the stolid soldiers, the row of twitching reporters whom the French government by a stretch of international courtesy had admitted to the case. Henry, surveying their hawk-like eyes and pencils, told himself that he for one could have dispensed with this kindness on the part of the government that was to try him. Then in a mere movement of mechanical curiosity, his eye went on to the jury, twelve stolid bourgeois who before his entrance had been chosen to decide on his fate; lastly his glance went to the president of the court and remained riveted there. In the hands of this lean, fair-haired Norman, tall in his robes of flowing scarlet, lay the fate of Henry Livingston.

The bell tinkled, the court opened. Loungers sat up in the chairs, and the busy pencils began to travel swiftly over the note-books of the reporters.

The *juge*, clearing his throat, gave the jury a brief resumé of the case to be presented to them. Owing to the fact that the prisoner,

as well as his alleged victim, was a foreigner, the affair was one of great delicacy and importance. Monsieur Livingston was an American, of New York; his identity had been established. The status of Monsieur le Comte Peter Tuharczin, on the other hand, though open to no real doubt, was less easy of assurance. Monsieur Tuharczin was a Servian, with residence at Belgrade. The public records of that city, however, had been destroyed by fire five years ago, at the occasion of the assassination of the late king. The city government had thus been able to give to the Court no records either of Monsieur Tuharczin's birth, his military service, or his marriage. The Tuharczin family was, however, well known at Belgrade, and, in default of documentary evidence, the identity of the deceased might be considered as established. It was a case which, for the honor of France, must be carefully presented and gravely judged. He concluded by calling upon the lawyers representing the government for an outline of the case as they meant to conduct it.

Livingston's heart pounded painfully as the Advocate-General arose. The government's case, Henry heard, was one which, though resting on circumstantial evidence alone, was singularly complete and binding. The prisoner's motive for the crime would be shown—a double motive. His presence in the room at the time of the murder would be shown; also numerous details which pointed to him as the criminal. In fine, by excluding the possibility of any other person's guilt, the government expected to prove that of Monsieur Livingston.

The defense was then given an opportunity to state its case. Dujardin, after a reproachful stare at his obstinate client, claimed the privilege of waiting until his final statement. Livingston set his teeth.

A little door to the right of the judge was opened. The first witness was introduced and sworn: Thérèse Bussy, lately *femme-de-chambre* to the wife of the deceased.

Her testimony was not calculated to raise her in the prisoner's favor. She testified to the passionate love existing between her mistress and the prisoner; also to the plans for a marriage in England, dashed at the last moment by the sudden arrival of the deceased. She also testified to the fact that her mistress had handed over to the prisoner the whole amount of her winnings at the Casino; a sum, she understood, of about one million francs in cash. She admitted that in return for a money consideration she had informed the deceased of the whereabouts of his wife's money; and that after the second breakfast on the third of July, her master had informed her, with some violence, that the American had refused to yield to him the Comtesse's property.

That same day she herself made an attempt to get the money

for her mistress, but met with a refusal. Her mistress, when leaving the Splendide at 5.50 on the evening of the murder, had told witness that she was going to claim her money from the American gentleman. Later, at the station, Madame la Comtesse had informed witness that the large trunk, with the initials H. V. L., contained her money. That was the reason, the witness understood, that her mistress felt obliged to bring it back with her to the hotel that night.

Corroborative testimony was offered by Pierre Boudin, the *gérant* of the Hôtel Splendide; by Pierre Blanc, a waiter at the restaurant of the Casino; and Louisa Hart, the proprietor of the English tea-rooms at Aix. Then followed Guillaume Savarin, the *gérant* of the Étrangers. He testified, with deep regret, to the violent encounter between the two gentlemen on the morning preceding the murder.

Richard Fayette, croupier at the Casino, declared that he recognized the valise, found in the American's room and produced in court, as that in which the Comtesse Tuharczin had packed her winnings on the night of her famous *coup*. By the number of one of the thousand-franc notes, and by the violet paper in which the rouleaux of gold were wrapped, he recognized the money in the valise as the same taken from the Casino on the occasion in question.

Paul Brantôme, proprietor of glass factory, Paris, introduced and sworn. Deposed that on afternoon of 3d July, between two and three o'clock, P.M., he was fishing on the lake. Saw the prisoner at solitary pistol-practice on the shore.

This finished the list of witnesses summoned by government to establish a motive and predetermined purpose on the part of the prisoner.

In the pain of the recollections they evoked, the prisoner bowed his head upon his hand. Yes, he had hoped to marry Rosalie Tuharczin. Yes, he had lifted his arm against the little wretch who had insulted him. He lifted his heavy head again. The government was now introducing its witnesses who should testify to the circumstances surrounding the crime itself.

Camille Delille, *portier* of the Hôtel des Étrangers, testified that the prisoner left the hotel before two o'clock P.M., on the day of the murder. He remembered the circumstance particularly because it was the hour of the siesta, and the street was empty. Witness wondered at the energy of Americans. Noticed that prisoner was wearing a suit of pale gray flannel with narrow line of dark green. (Suit produced in court. "Is this it?" Without hesitation the witness answers yes. Resumes testimony.)

At 4.55 P.M. the prisoner reëntered the hotel, still wearing the same suit. Went upstairs.

At 5.50 the Comtesse Tuharczin entered the hotel, wearing a

scarlet dress and hat. She did not speak to witness, but went directly to *gérant* at the desk. She was shown upstairs. Later, witness was told she had inquired for prisoner; the *gérant*, having only just returned from an errand, informed her that Monsieur Livingston had not yet come in. She had then asked to be shown to his apartment to wait for his return.

At 6.15 the witness went upstairs, saw prisoner in the reading-room, in the same corridor with his own room. He was alone, reading a newspaper. Witness noticed he was still wearing the same suit of pale gray with dark-green line. Appeared somewhat nervous and disturbed. Witness informed him that the Comtesse Tuharczin was waiting for him. Prisoner jumped to his feet in evident excitement, ran rapidly to his door, and was admitted.

At 6.27 the prisoner and Madame Tuharczin descended together, with two porters carrying a large trunk which witness recognized as property of the prisoner. (Trunk produced in court. "Is this the trunk?" Witness declares yes; recognizes it by its immense size, by its American make, and by initials, "H. V. L., N. Y.," on the end. Resumes testimony.)

The two waited together for three minutes at the door. Then the porters returned with hand-cart, and witness heard Comtesse direct them to take the trunk to the station, in time for the nine o'clock train.

César Dufaux, chauffeur, was next introduced. Deposed that in the early afternoon of the 3d July he was in the garage behind the Hôtel des Étrangers. It was the hour of the siesta, the street and garage were deserted. He was awake because he had some repairs to make to his machine. Saw a gentleman whom he recognized as the Comte Peter Tuharczin come down the little street in a cautious manner. At the door of the chauffeurs' entrance to the hotel, the Comte stood for a moment with the air of one who watches and listens. He then entered. Half an hour later, when witness lay down in his machine for a nap, he had not seen the Comte come out again.

Jacques Douville, valet-de-chambre of Hôtel des Étrangers, was next introduced and sworn. Deposed: on the 3d July, about two o'clock P.M., he met the deceased Comte Tuharczin in the corridor of the entresol, Hôtel des Étrangers. Asked to be taken to the apartment of Monsieur Livingston. Witness, knowing there had been a public dispute between the two gentlemen in the morning, refused. Deceased offered him a louis, and told him it was to arrange a meeting that he had now come. Witness cared nothing for the money, but understood well the importance of an affair of honor between two gentlemen; so showed the deceased to the prisoner's salon, to await his return. Did not see him come out.

Deposed that in the evening of the same day, the electric lights being extinguished by storm, he was summoned to bring candles to prisoner's room. Found the tiled floor of salon wet in puddles. Found the bath-room stripped of towels and the bed of all its coverings. The prisoner himself, who was ordinarily calm and *gentil*, like all Americans, was in a noticeably excited and irritable condition.

Recognized trunk, produced in court, as that which had stood for a fortnight in prisoner's room, and was taken away the evening of the murder.

Recognized bludgeon, produced in court, as the same which had been on mantelpiece in prisoner's room.

Recognized sheets, blankets, and blood-stained towels, produced in court, as property of Hôtel des Etrangers.

Camille Duval, porter, next introduced and sworn. Testified to taking the trunk in question from the prisoner's room to the station, on the evening of the 3d July. Both he and Jean Brassey, who was with him, remarked on the extraordinary weight of the trunk.

At 8.45, when the notice was posted at the station that the train would not go through, the lady came to witness and told him that she intended taking the gentleman's trunk back with her to the hotel, in order to save him the trouble. Witness described the incident of the trunk falling from the cart, and the discovery of the dead body.

Evidence corroborated by Jean Brassey, porter, and Xavier Bruges, carter.

Jules Bergal, *sergent de ville*, introduced and sworn. Deposed that on night on 3d July he answered summons from Hôtel Splendide. Took the trunk (which he now recognized in court) to the Commissariat, where it was opened. Inside was found the body of a small man, dead apparently for some hours. He and the Commissaire both recognized the dead man as the Comte Peter Tuharczin, husband of the famous Comtesse Tuharczin. A deep wound on temple, made apparently with a blunt and heavy instrument, showed cause of death. The body was packed in trunk with a stuffing of sheets and other bed-clothes. A singular feature was that though the wound in the head was a deep one, the sheets enveloping the corpse were hardly stained. In the bottom of the trunk, on the contrary, was a bundle of towels soaked in blood and water.

The right hand of the corpse was clenched. The Commissaire forced it open, and discovered a gold coin. On one side it bore the stamp of "In God We Trust." On the other, which had been polished smooth, the initials "H. V. L." Recognized coin, produced in court.

Deposed further: at 10.35 he was sent, with Hugues Lichtenberger, to arrest the owner of the trunk. When he entered the prisoner's room at the Etrangers, after some resistance, he found an automobile

trunk, containing a valise with a large sum of money in it, hidden under prisoner's bed.

After further search, he found in drawer of writing-table a leaded stick with marks of blood upon it. Also in the wardrobe he found a suit of pale gray flannels, with hair-line of dark green, and spots of blood upon it.

Recognized motor trunk, valise, and money, produced in court.

Recognized bludgeon, produced in court.

Recognized the blood-stained suit, produced in court.

At the sight of the garments there was something like an exclamation from the silent prisoner. In spite of the excessive heat, a cold sweat had broken out over him. For the first time he realized the horrid predicament in which he stood. In the matter of the blood-stained suit, he had suspected some trickery. He now remembered the locket with the unknown face, the broken glass, the lacerated thumb. Even should he open his mouth in his own defense, how prove it was his own blood and not the blood of Peter Tuharczin that stained the clothes he had worn that day? And how prove, even if he chose to do so, that the gold coin had been presented by him as a keepsake to the woman who had disappeared.

He took a long breath and braced his nerves for the next ordeal. For Bergal's testimony having been confirmed by Hugues Lichtenberger, *sergent de ville*, Théophile Fermoy, chauffeur to the prisoner, was next introduced and sworn.

The man, who seemed sincerely attached to his master, was in a state of obvious emotion. After being severely urged by the president of the court, he owned that his master, on the afternoon of the 3d July, had directed him to prepare for an early departure the following morning. On the witness inquiring if the motor trunk was to be put back in its place, the prisoner regarded him sharply and told him it would be sent by rail.

Recognized the gold coin, produced in court, as one which his master sometimes used to toss when the road was undecided, and which was worn always upon Monsieur Livingston's watch-chain.

The chauffeur, sobbing audibly, was led away. The reporters sat up with renewed energy. A long rustle that ended in a sigh ran about the court-room. The medical testimony, the most thrilling of all, was now to be introduced. The physicians formed the last of the government's witnesses.

André Michel, doctor of medicine, a stout, self-satisfied person of sixty-five, was next introduced and sworn. Deposed, he had been summoned to the Commissariat on night of 3d July, at 9.58 o'clock. Had helped remove the body from the trunk. Recognized it as that of the Comte Tuharczin, whom he had often seen at Casino.

Testified that on forehead and left temple of corpse he found a severe bruise, with much discoloration; and a long cut opened that ran from one inch above left eyebrow to the left ear. Both wound and discoloration were evidently the result of one blow, inflicted by a blunt heavy instrument. The concussion, rather than the wound, was the cause of death; though the excessive bleeding, unchecked by medical aid, would undoubtedly have destroyed any chance of survival after the blow.

The president of the court, at the request of the Advocate-General, here interrupted the witness to indicate the bludgeon found in prisoner's room. "With such an instrument as that?" Witness examined the bludgeon, declared it was precisely the weapon which might be supposed as dealing such a blow as he had beheld on head of deceased. Resumed testimony.

Though the wound was deep and must have bled freely, yet, as Bergal had testified, the sheets and other bedding surrounding the corpse were only very slightly stained. This showed that the corpse must have been placed in the trunk only after the blood had begun to coagulate in the arteries; that is to say, at least one hour after death. Questioned by president: yes, it was physically impossible that the crime could have been committed after the entrance of the Comtesse Tuharczin at 5.50 o'clock.

Testified that in one corner of the trunk was found a bundle of towels soaked with human blood and water.

Testified that the bludgeon, though an evident attempt had been made to cleanse it, still bore traces of human blood.

This finished the testimony of Doctor Michel. It was corroborated by two other physicians, practitioners of Aix-les-Bains.

The Advocate-General turned to the president with a bow. This completed the list of witnesses for the government. He would now have the honor of giving place to the witnesses for the defense.

Henry Livingston sat like a statue in his seat as the government witnesses added fact to fact and link to link. The walls of the dingy, splendid hall were closing in on him—it seemed to him that with his visual eye he could see them slowly approaching each other.

His lawyer, Monsieur Dujardin, was addressing the president. The prisoner, from chivalrous notions of protecting the Comtesse Tuharczin's reputation, had refused to shed any light whatever on the happenings of the fatal afternoon. But now that he must perceive that any testimony in his own defense must come from his own mouth and no other, he would doubtless lay aside his scruples and give the necessary testimony.

The president, after some deliberation, gave the required permission. Like one in a dream, Henry was hustled to the witness-stand between

his two guardians, and found himself repeating the terms of the oath.

It seemed to him that the crowded court room was one sheet of glistening eyes. The silence seemed to strain itself like the living expression of all these ears that were stretched to hear him. He braced his muscles in a sudden convulsive gripping of his scattered forces. Then he held up his head and bowed composedly to the president.

"Monsieur Livingston, will you give to the jury a full and clear account of your actions on the third of July last?"

Henry took a long breath. Silence might be unreasonable, might be fanatical; but to tell was impossible. To tell on Rosalie—poor, terror-driven little Rosalie! Rosalie, whose soft cheek had pressed his own. For the first time it seemed to him that he knew what love was; and how weak a thing, beside it, was death.

He raised his head. His forehead was beaded with sweat, but his eyes shone steadily and directly into the piercing glance of the president of the court, as he replied:

"I have nothing to say, monsieur the president."

The president surveyed him with an unmoved glance. "When a prisoner is on trial for his life, it is not usual to threaten him with punishment for contempt of court. I will merely remind you, monsieur, that if you fail to comply there is only one construction that can be put upon your actions."

"I am aware of that, monsieur." Henry spoke quietly but determinedly.

With the exception of his own lawyers, the eyes that were bent upon him from all sides were eyes of admiration. The judge, however, observed:

"It is possible for an innocent man to sacrifice himself for a woman. It is also possible for a guilty man to take advantage of a woman's presence in the case to give himself the appearance of a chivalrous martyr. In this case, the jury will have to decide. The witness is excused."

Between his two gendarmes, Henry was returned to his seat. He had kept his own self-respect; but he knew that his life was forfeit.

Suddenly he heard the calm, thin tones of the president, raised for the summons of the next witness:

"Call Rosalie Tuharczin!"

XVIII.

THE door to the right of the president opened, and a woman's figure appeared, dressed and veiled in black. She walked with the appearance of great weakness, supported on one side by a stout

gendarme, on the other by a black parasol which she used as a walking-stick. She sank into a seat. A murmur ran about the hall.

"Put back your veil, madame," said the president, with respectful sympathy. With an unsteady hand, the witness obeyed. Before him, Henry saw the face of Rosalie.

But of a Rosalie how altered! A Rosalie whose slender body seemed hardly able to bear its own pitiful weight upward. A Rosalie wasted and white, with eyes burned hollow by the fire of fevers hardly yet extinguished. These eyes, roving the court room, rested for one single moment upon Livingston's straining gaze; an exalted instant, an instant of revelation. Then they dropped.

Maitre Dujardin was speaking:

"Is it permitted that I explain to the court the reason for the tardy appearance of this witness, whose testimony is not included in the report of the *juge d'instruction*?"

"Yes, *maitre*."

"I thank you, monsieur the president. It appears, then, that the witness, after hearing of the discovery of her husband's body in the trunk, was overtaken with a delirious terror. Her one idea, it seems, was to go immediately to pray for his soul at the cross on the Mountain of the Eagle. She was accustomed to go there every day by funicular, to make her prayers, being very *dévoté*. Accordingly, she set out in the storm, still wearing her travelling-dress and carrying a hand-bag. She skirted the lake, guided by the lightning flashes; and succeeded in making her way almost half-way up the mountain, on its deserted side. Here, however, she became exhausted and fell. She was found the next evening, still soaking wet and quite unable to speak for a violent cold on her throat and chest. Her discoverer was an old woman who lives alone on the mountain-side and gathers herbs for a living. She took the witness home to her cabin and cared for her. For more than two weeks the witness's malady rendered her incapable even of whispering. Two days ago, when her voice began to return to her, she immediately sent her hostess down to the valley for news. And upon hearing of this case she insisted at once upon leaving her asylum and coming to make her testimony. Owing to her weakness, which is still great, and to her uncertainty where she should address herself, she managed to reach us only at eight o'clock last evening. At ten o'clock, we wired to Paris for expert witnesses, and obtained a permit from the Prefect for their inquiry. In this, I am afraid, we were too late. But perhaps the testimony of the present witness will suffice."

Maitre Dujardin concluded and sat down. Leaning on her sunshade, Rosalie advanced to the bar and was sworn. In her speech as in her bearing, the fierce energy of her spirit seemed to defy the

physical weakness which possessed her. Henry, regarding her white face, recalled his old fancy of Joan of Arc; but now a Joan lit with the flame of her consecrated purpose, fearless of the other fires.

"Madame, your name, please?"

She hesitated, swallowed. Livingston's keen eye marked the rippling of her muscles, the clenching of her hands. Then her flaming eyes came to rest on his, as she answered:

"Sister Geneviève."

The president sternly repressed the murmured excitement. Then, turning back to the witness, who sat like marble, he repeated his question:

"Your name, madame?"

"Sister Geneviève, of the convent of Sainte-Anne de Poulhac, near Plombec, Finistère."

Livingston took in his breath, staring like one dazed at the white face silhouetted silver-like against the upraised black veil. He remembered her agonized prayers, her struggling piety; so this was the explanation: a nun! His Rosalie was a nun! Though conventual rule was to him, as to most Americans, rather a picturesque tradition than a living force, still the inherited instinct of centuries is a thing that moves deep. The sacredness of the vestal virgin is a race-old idea not to be lightly thrown aside; in the very name stirred the prohibition on the Unseen. In spite of his modern training, a certain horror ran through Henry's bones. A nun! It was a nun whose lips he had kissed; a nun who stood there motionless at the witness-stand before him. He pushed amazement and horror behind him, and strained his ears for the next question and answer.

"But since the act of December, 1901, as you are no doubt well aware, madame, the convent of Sainte-Anne de Poulhac, like the other convents in France, no longer exists; and the name you give is extinct with it. Your name of baptism and of family, please?"

"Rose Yvonne Kermesnil, monsieur the president."

"Your domicile?"

"Plombec, Finistère, monsieur the president."

"You have never been married?"

She shrank. A scarlet flush glowed suddenly over her wasted face. Then she answered:

"No, monsieur the president."

"Then the deceased, who called himself Comte Peter Tuharczin, and your husband—who was he?"

"Hector Le Roux, monsieur the president; the nephew of——"

She paused with a sharp intake of breath. The president did not spare her hesitation.

"The nephew of whom, mademoiselle?"

She winced, whether at the new title or at the necessity of speech. Then she answered:

"Of my godfather, monsieur the president, who received me in his house after the congregations were dispersed and the soldiers had driven me out of the Convent of Sainte-Anne."

"This gentleman—his name?"

"Raymond Le Roux, ancient captain of the French cavalry. At one time chargé d'affaires for the French government in Belgrade."

The face in the locket! Henry's mind, darkening suddenly, closed over a new and yet more hideous idea than any that had come before. Who was he, this captain of cavalry and ex-diplomat, who had received this beautiful young girl into his house; and was it merely gratitude, or the remembrance of something more powerful, that had preserved his face beside Rosalie's in her locket?

"Madame——" The president paused, then corrected himself: "Mademoiselle, you have yourself been in Servia?"

"I have never crossed the frontier of France, monsieur."

"Then this name of Comtesse Tuharczin was a mere pretense, a masquerade?"

"Yes, monsieur the president."

"And Hector Le Roux, recognizing your picture in the paper, came here to blackmail you by threats of betraying you?"

"Yes, monsieur the president."

"He threatened to inform Monsieur Livingston that you were lately a nun?"

"That and—other things."

"What things, mademoiselle?"

Again her scarlet flush showed the effort with which she spoke. "Hector was very angry, monsieur, when his uncle, dying, left his little fortune to me. He insisted that I should—marry him. That was one reason that I ran away from Plombec and took a new name—that and the desire to see the world. But Hector found me out. He was clever enough to match his new name to mine, and, assuming a position which I could not deny without denying my own, he called himself my husband. He swore that if I refused him he would betray me to Monsieur Livingston; and that he would, besides, tell things about his uncle and me that—that were not true." She hung her head in a constriction of mental suffering that shook her like an ague.

"Then the deceased demanded more of you than your money, mademoiselle?"

She paused a moment. Her painful whisper was almost inaudible as she replied:

"He declared that I must go away with him. I refused. Then

at last he offered, if I would give him the money, to go away and leave me. I suspected a trick, so I refused to give it to him unless he signed a paper admitting that he was an impostor and a blackmailer. I knew I must have some hold over him to force him to keep his word. But he refused to give me any such paper. He demanded my million francs from me. That was what we were disputing about, monsieur the president, when he—he died."

"Ah! And now, mademoiselle, that you have told us the identity of the deceased, and the nature of his connection with you, will you please tell the court what you know of the circumstances of the murder."

The witness, coughing, leaned forward.

"I saw Monsieur Livingston leave his hotel," the hoarse whisper resumed. "I was kneeling in my window, behind the shutters. I had hoped to see him. Then I remained there, trying—trying to pray. The windows of his apartment, in the Hôtel des Etrangers, were directly opposite mine. I looked across. Suddenly I saw some one moving in his room. At first I thought it was a valet of the hotel. Then I looked again, and saw it was Hector Le Roux. I knew what he was seeking. For Monsieur Livingston, monsieur, had kindly made himself the trustee of my money—the money I won at the Casino. He had told me he kept it in a trunk, and he gave me the keys. I hurried to look for them—they were gone. How Hector had found the hiding-place I did not know; but I knew then that he knew. And I knew that unless I did something promptly both my money and my hold over him would be gone."

She paused, with her hand at her laboring throat. The president looked at her with dignified compassion.

"And then, mademoiselle?"

"And then, monsieur the president, I reflected that to seek him publicly, to go to the Hôtel des Etrangers and demand to be taken to the room of Monsieur Livingston—to expose Hector thus to the whole hotel—would be to make him angry and to betray everything. Though it was the early afternoon, the streets were empty like the dawn. I wore a black dress, I found one of the aprons of my maid Thérèse. I slipped around the corner, and entered the servants' entrance of the Etrangers without seeing so much as a cat! In the corridor upstairs I counted the doors, matching them to the windows; so I found Monsieur Livingston's door. I knocked at it—a small knock like a servant. It was opened by Hector Le Roux."

Again the witness paused with a fit of coughing that showed how violent was the effort of her swollen throat muscles. The president ordered water to be brought, which seemed to revive her. She resumed:

"I had no fear of Hector, monsieur the president. He was short, and weakened with much absinthe. Besides that, he had suffered always with a disease of the heart. Even in Bretagne, the doctor told him that unless he stopped his absinthe his heart would kill him. But he drank always. That was one reason, monsieur, that his uncle disinherited him! So when he turned and threatened me, as I entered the room, I was not afraid. He said he would take the money. I said he might if he would sign a paper promising never to blackmail me again. He said he would have the money and me, too. I could see he had been drinking. He tried to seize me—he was horrible—horrible!" Again she shuddered, and closed her eyes. The court waited for her to recover. She took another sip of water and resumed.

"So at last I was afraid. I dared not scream, so I picked up the leaded stick that lay on Monsieur Livingston's chimney-piece—the same stick that he had taken from the assassin that had tried to rob me the night I had won at the Casino. When Hector saw the stick in my hand he became all crimson and purple with rage. I was afraid he would rouse the hotel. I told him to remember his weak heart, and not to excite himself. It was that that made him so angry. He made a rush at me—so. He seized the gold chain that hung about my neck. I could smell the absinthe on his breath. It made me ill, so that I dropped the stick. He snatched it with a noise under his breath like a dog. My chain snapped as I turned. He leaped after me. Suddenly the stick dropped from his hand, and he dropped, too. His head struck against the corner of the marble chimney. He lay quite still. The blood began to flow from under his head in a long stream across the tiles. I spoke to him—he did n't answer. I knelt by him—he was dead. All purple, and dead."

She covered her face with her hands. A rustle went through the room. Livingston started like a man waking from a nightmare. Was Rosalie's story true? No mere fabrication to save his life and her own, but the real truth, which could be proved to the jury? Was it possible her wild tale would convince those stolid, cynical bourgeois that sat in the jury-box?

"And then, mademoiselle, you called for aid? You gave due notice of the death?"

The president spoke with severity. The witness hung her head.

"No, monsieur the president; I was afraid."

Her whisper was almost inaudible.

"And then, mademoiselle, what did you do?"

"I wanted to get away. He lay so still. So I ran out and closed the door. I hardly knew what I was doing—I had to get away, that was all I knew. So I ran down the servants' staircase, and out.

The street was still empty. Everybody was asleep. I arrived at my room without meeting any one but two or three servants, who took me for one. Then I sat down in my room and looked across at those windows. Suddenly, like a blow on the head, the idea came to me: When they find Hector dead there in Monsieur Livingston's room, they will think that he killed him! I remembered the wound on his head, and the blood that flowed. I remembered that that very morning Hector and Monsieur Livingston had had a public encounter in the vestibule of the *Etrangers*. I remembered that Hector was supposed to be my husband, and that my money lay there, still there in Monsieur Livingston's room—with Hector dead beside it. I could see, as plainly as it was told me yesterday, what the police would think. And I could see how cowardly, how foolish, I had been to run away. If I had called in help when the body was still warm, perhaps they would have believed my story. I looked at the clock—it was nearly five o'clock. Almost three hours! But I knew that Monsieur Livingston had not yet returned. I must do something to save him, I saw that—if only to be in the room with the dead man, to take the responsibility. So I called my maid and told her to dress me quickly—my new scarlet dress, that Hector had ordered. I had said to him I would never wear it; but now I remembered, it would not show the stains. So I went over to the other hotel. It was then about half-past five, and the street and vestibule were crowded. The *gérant* told me Monsieur Livingston had not come in. He looked surprised when I asked to be shown to his room, but I insisted. A valet took me upstairs. I entered very cautiously, so that he should not see inside. Hector still lay there, just as I had left him. But he was cold and stiff, and the blood was drying on the floor. There were so many flies——”

She stopped short. Her face was ghastly white. Henry feared that she would faint, and his heart yearned over her pain. She took another swallow of water, and continued:

“I looked at him. I saw that his head was bruised and cut, and a long wound ran across his temple. I saw that the bludgeon had rolled from his hand and was covered with his blood. I understood that no reasonable creature would believe that corpse was not the corpse of a murdered man. Suppose I called out now and said that I had murdered him? But he was dead two hours, and no one had seen me come for the first time. Suppose they did not believe me, suppose they took Monsieur Livingston, who had left the hotel only at two o'clock! So the dreadful idea came to me, why need any one know, at all? Suppose I hide it! Where the idea came from I do not know; but my eye fell on the big trunk in the corner. It was the trunk Monsieur Livingston had told me of, where he kept my

money. He was going to send it to me, so he had given me the keys, which Hector had stolen. They lay beside him. I picked them up. I flew to open it. I had no time to think. I took out the small trunk of gold that was inside of the other, I hid it under Monsieur Livingston's bed. Then I went to—to that thing that was lying on the floor, so still. I had no time to waste; but just the same, I could not touch it. So I went and took the counterpane from the bed, and threw it over him. To touch him—that was hard. But it was done to save the innocent—did I do wrong? So I asked God to help me. Then I stooped and lifted him and carried him to the trunk. It seemed to me that God did help me! Because I found I could put him in quite easily. He was a small man, and had fallen all twisted in a heap. I worked quickly; I was afraid I was going to be ill. But I took towels from the bath-room and washed the floor; then I washed the bludgeon and put it back. But the towels! I wrapped them together, and put them in the trunk. Then I remembered, perhaps he might bleed again! I did not know. So I went and took the sheets and blankets from the bed, and packed them around him. Then I locked the trunk. Then I washed my hands. I was ill—very ill. Then I heard a knock at the door, and went to unlock it. It was Monsieur Livingston."

She paused, breathing hoarsely, like a spent runner. Sympathy, horror, and admiration were blended in the glances bent upon her. As for Livingston, he was conscious of one feeling only: a deep and solemn thankfulness that he had had the strength to maintain his silence.

"And you informed him of the circumstance, mademoiselle?"

She answered with simplicity: "Do you not understand that if I had all my work would have been wasted? He would never have permitted me to depart with that trunk—he would have insisted upon keeping it, and the responsibility of its contents, all upon himself. No, that was what I was resolute to prevent. So I told him I had come for my treasure. I took the trunk away, as you know. I intended to go to Milan that night; and the next day to buy a ticket for Constantinople, and send the trunk there, where they murder every day, and the police do not fuss over such things. As for myself, I intended to come back to France—but when I arrived at the station I found I could not even leave it. The trains were stopped by the storm. I dared not leave the trunk in the station overnight, so I brought it back. It broke open. I heard the shout from the street, and knew what had happened. I never thought that after I myself had taken the trunk and hired the porters, blame could be put upon Monsieur Livingston!

"I thought only of one thing: that now he would believe me a

murderess. I wanted to run away where he would never see me again. I stopped for nothing—not even to find the keepsake he had given me, that had hung on my chain—a gold coin with his initials on it. I ran away in the rain. I wanted to die. It seemed to me that if I could reach the cross on the mountain, perhaps I could say a prayer that God would hear, and then die in peace. It was raining, but there were lightning flashes that helped me to find the path. I was tired—so tired and cold! I fell. A poor woman found me and took me home to her little hut. I was very ill. She nursed me with herbs. I gave her all the money I had in my hand-bag, and she was very good to me, poor old creature. No one came near her cabin; but yesterday she went to the city to sell her herbs. She heard the news and told me of it. I got up at once and started for the town. I arrived at eight o'clock last night. Was I too late, monsieur the president?"

She sank back into her seat. A cheer went around the hall. Spectators, reporters, lawyers, even the jury, seemed unable to control the enthusiasm evoked by her beauty and her courage. The president pounded on his desk and shouted for silence, but in vain. Excitement and admiration swept over the court in a roar of voices and of hand-clappings, then died off into a murmur. The prisoner sat with a bright flush upon his cheeks. The Advocate-General consulted with his junior. Then at his request, silence having succeeded, the president questioned the witness:

"Mademoiselle, did any one see you when you entered the Hôtel des Etrangers for the first time?"

"No, monsieur. Everybody in the city was asleep. In the garage opposite the servants' door when I entered, I saw a chauffeur working on his machine; but he was very busy and never turned his head."

"And when you came out, after that first visit—it was about three o'clock?"

"It was quarter before three, monsieur the president. I noticed the clock in Monsieur Livingston's room. But I met no one in the hall—no one that looked at me. I saw a maid-servant at the other end of the corridor, but it was quite dark with the thunder-clouds without, so she did not notice me."

Again there was consultation between the government attorneys; another question followed, directed this time to the lawyers for the defense:

"Are other witnesses to be produced for the defense?"

Maitre Dujardin showed signs of anxiety. He glanced at his watch, then at the door.

"Monsieur the president, it is uncertain. Owing to the late return of this witness, we were late in wiring to Paris for expert witnesses.

As you know, we have the authorization for them to enter the tomb. It is possible we may yet have further testimony to produce."

Again consultation. Then:

"*Maitre*, it is not a question of expert testimony, but of fact. Have you no other witnesses to testify to the presence of this witness in the Hôtel des Etrangers between two and three o'clock on the 3d July?"

"No, monsieur the president."

"The old woman on the mountain—she who is described as receiving the witness for the time intervening between the murder and the trial—she is to be produced?"

Again *Maitre* Dujardin, hesitating, answered with visible reluctance:

"Monsieur the president, it is to be regretted that the poor creature's mental state incapacitates her from giving testimony in court. She is very *dévoté*. She knew it was a former nun that she had nursed. When she heard of the husband's murder, she was horrified, not at the idea of the murder, but at the thought of the husband. She declared her house had been polluted. Her condition become so violent that she had to be left alone. It is out of the question, I regret to say, to bring her here."

A further question by the president, at request of prosecution:

"Was it you, mademoiselle, or the deceased, that removed the trunk of money from Monsieur Livingston's trunk and hid it under his bed?"

"It was I, monsieur the president."

"That trunk on the table before you?"

The witness examined the motor trunk, open and with the valise within it.

"Yes, monsieur the president."

Further consultation between the prosecuting lawyers. Then questions through the president:

"But the gold coin contained in that trunk, mademoiselle, weighs a trifle over a hundred kilos; two hundredweight English. You, mademoiselle, are a slightly-built woman. You weigh no more, probably, than fifty-five kilos. You wish the jury to understand that you, unaided, lifted that motor trunk of gold coin from the larger trunk, dragged it to the bedroom, and hid it where it was found, under the bed?"

"Monsieur, I was afraid of noise if I dragged it. I carried it."

The faint whisper, the drooping figure, made the words appear farcical. There was a slight titter, suppressed by the president. Henry, remembering the ease with which that slender arm had once tossed the gold from her motor into his hands, leaned forward with a beating

heart. Just here, at this cruelly trifling, yet cruelly essential, point, was her case to break down?

"Another point, mademoiselle. The deceased, though not tall, was solidly built; the weight of the body is recorded as seventy-five kilos. And it was, moreover, stiffened in the rigor-mortis. You wish the jury to understand that you, unaided, lifted this body in your arms, carried it across the room, and forced it into the trunk?"

The witness shuddered, as though strongly moved by the picture thus evoked. Then with an effort she replied:

"Yes, monsieur the president. Though I am not big, I am strong. My father, when I was a child, said I had the muscles of a cat. In the convent, it was I who always carried the water from the well for the other sisters, and who rolled away the great stone from the entrance to the reliquary, on the feast day of Sainte-Anne. If monsieur the president will have the goodness to test the muscles of my arms——"

A burst of laughter, rippling over the court room, interrupted her laboring whisper. She looked about her. Doubt was in every face; in one mingled with pity, in another with the anticipation of triumph. The light came up suddenly into her hollow eyes; she glared about her at the doubting faces, like a brave lioness. Then she turned to the president:

"Will monsieur the president permit that I give proofs to the jury?"

"Proofs of what, mademoiselle?"

"Of my power to do what I say I did."

"If you can do so without disturbing the decorum of the proceedings, mademoiselle!"

Without hesitation, she snatched up the black sunshade from her side.

"Monsieur the president will permit that the jury examine the handle of this parasol? It is really steel—steel, unflawed and with no sign of having been tampered with beforehand?"

The sheriff, taking the filmy black trifle from her hand, conveyed it silently to the jurors. With solemn gesture they passed it from hand to hand, examined it through their spectacles, twisted and tested it. Finally the foreman announced:

"Monsieur the president, the rod is of hollow steel, without crack or flaw, as the witness declares."

The sheriff returned it to her. The court room was all staring eyes and straining breath. The witness, forgetting her previous condition of prostration, rose to her feet. With two swift gestures she swept off her long black gloves, and opened the parasol. Her slender shoulders were braced like the wings of a swooping sea-gull. Her bare arms,

extended straight before her, gripped the steel rod. The hands were perhaps two inches apart. There was a hoarse pulsation as she drew her breath. The thin white arms quivered. There was a snap like that of a tiny explosion. Flushed and triumphant, the witness turned to the president, extending toward him the two ends of the divided rod. A murmur went about the court room.

The president, however, at the request of the Advocate-General, was questioning the witness.

"The court would like to be informed, mademoiselle, how it is that you, a sick woman, can be capable of such extraordinary feats of strength?"

Still flushed with her recent victory, Rosalie gazed open-mouthed. Then replied:

"But I am not sick to-day. I am well now!"

In spite of the bravery of her words, she sank back exhausted in her seat. The president continued his questioning:

"Then if you are a well woman, as your recent exhibition of force would indicate, the court would like to be informed why it was that you delayed until the last moment before coming forward; instead of appearing at the inquiry of the *juge d'instruction*, as is required by the law, and as the other witnesses were forced to do?"

She stared from side to side, like one who sees herself trapped. The triumph of her recent success faded from her eyes, giving place to despair, as one who perceived herself guilty of an irrevocable blunder. She laid her hand on her throat, and made a gesture that asked for water. The sheriff gave her the goblet. She drank, and the painful voice came again:

"Monsieur the president, you mean that after I have shown the jury my strength, they will not believe I spoke the truth in telling of my illness?"

"Mademoiselle, that is for them to decide. But, I admit, it is unfortunate that you can produce no witnesses to the facts which you aver."

"Ah!" She paused a moment, then faced the judge desperately. "Monsieur the president, you mean that there is doubt whether the jury will believe that I was in Monsieur Livingston's room at the hour indicated; that I saw Hector Le Roux die; that I, and no one else, put his body in that trunk, and took it away with me? You mean there is doubt they will believe my story at all?"

"Mademoiselle, I must call it to your attention that your present remarks and questions are entirely irregular. If you have no more testimony to offer the court, you may withdraw."

"Monsieur the president, for the love of Heaven!" She joined her thin hands. Whether by her plaintive whisper or by the brightness

of her wasted beauty, the president was moved for the instant from his sternness.

"Mademoiselle, as I said before, it is for the jury, and not for me, to decide on the validity of your evidence. But I will repeat, it is unfortunate that you have no witnesses to corroborate your story."

"Then it is possible, monsieur the president, that the jury will not believe that Hector Le Roux died of his ancient malady—that it was no murder, but a natural death?"

The irregularity of this last question exhausted even the leniency granted by the gallant president to a beautiful woman. He made a gesture that commanded silence, and turned to the attorneys for the defense.

"Maitre Dujardin, I understand that this is your last witness? I understand that no medical testimony is forthcoming to contradict the testimony already offered, that the deceased came to his death through a blow upon the head?"

Dujardin hesitated, consulted with his colleague, then replied with obvious reluctance:

"Monsieur the president, we had hoped to be able to produce such testimony, but I fear we were too late."

The president turned back to the witness, who stood with wide-open, shining eyes and parted lips. All her former energy was in her poise, all her former intensity of vivid life. With a fierce gesture of her hand, she thrust rule and decorum aside.

"Then if the jury believe I lied to them about my recent illness, they may believe that my testimony is all a lie, invented for the purpose of saving Monsieur Livingston without danger to myself?"

"I only draw your attention, mademoiselle, to the fact that your testimony rests upon your unsupported word. And you admit that the very name under which, till this past hour, you have appeared, was a pure invention of your own. Against the circumstantial evidence offered against the prisoner, and against the testimony of the physicians, I will admit that the testimony of an ex-nun, masquerading as a Servian comtesse, does not seem to me to carry much weight. Sheriff, you may remove the witness."

But the arm whose vise-like muscles had snapped the steel rod flung off the fat fingers of the sheriff like those of a baby. For an instant the brilliance of her eyes streamed across the room and rested on those of the prisoner. A breath of excitement swept through the crowd. Never had such a scene interrupted the decorum of a French court room.

"Then if my testimony is to be thrust aside as that of a self-proved liar," she whispered hoarsely, "I will admit the truth, for I cannot leave this room till I know that he is safe." She took in

her breath, and her next words, as though rending their way by the very force of will through the swollen and tortured muscles of her throat, burst out in a shrill cry:

"You're right, monsieur the president! I'm nothing but a sham and a fraud from beginning to end. My story, my sickness, my whisper itself—look, I can speak as clearly as any one here, when I choose. And since my lies have been useless to save the prisoner, then I will confess the truth. It was I who killed Hector Le Roux! You yourself have witnessed the strength of my hands. It was this hand, with the leaded stick in it, that dealt Hector Le Roux the blow from which he died!"

The court room was silent. The prisoner gripped the sides of his chair. All eyes were fixed upon the witness, who stood glowing like a Mænad, kindling in an exalted brightness of beauty.

The president broke the silence:

"Then you mean us to understand, mademoiselle, that you wish to have the prisoner discharged, and a new trial begun with yourself in his place; self-confessed as the murderer of Hector Le Roux, alias Peter Tuharczin."

"That is what I wish, monsieur the president."

The tones were clear and firm. From Livingston's mind his frenzy of admiration was swept by a sudden dreadful realization. The time in which he could act was short. He leaned forward and beckoned to his lawyer.

A moment later, Maître Dujardin spoke:

"The prisoner desires permission to address the court."

"It is granted."

Livingston stood up. His eyes, steadily avoiding the imploring brightness of the witness's, were fixed firmly on the president of the court.

"Monsieur the president, I beg the privilege of contradicting the evidence offered by the last witness. This lady, before the arrival of the man known in Aix as the Comte Tuharczin, had done me the honor to consent to become my wife. It is possible some of the jury may know by experience the extreme self-sacrifice of which a devoted woman is capable. In accusing herself of the murder of the deceased, the witness has deliberately perjured herself to save my life. Rather than let her suffer for my crime, I will confess it. As the circumstantial evidence goes to prove, I, and I alone, am guilty of the murder of Hector Le Roux."

A deep breath stirred the steaming air of the crowded hall. Rosalie stretched out her hands to the speaker. Then with a little choking noise she fell sideways. The sheriff caught her. She was carried from the court room in a state of evident unconsciousness.

XIX.

THE speech of the prosecuting attorney was of a rigid and convincing logic. Detail by detail, he pieced together the evidence that proved Henry Vane Livingston guilty of the murder of the man known as Peter Tuharczin.

He would omit, he said, all consideration of the theatrical scene they had just witnessed; a scene evidently contrived by the defense for the purpose of moving the jury's sympathies. The unexpected entrance had been well arranged. Unfortunately, the witness had spoiled its fine dramatic effect by disproving the reason for its existing at all. In her excess of zeal to save her acknowledged lover, she had betrayed a physical strength unusual in a well woman, impossible in the invalid she claimed to be. If her very excuse for her delayed testimony was thus proved a lie, what remained? Was the jury to be convinced by her first elaborate story, or by her final retraction of it? Were they to accept her tale of accidental death, or her hysterical self-denunciation as the murderess?

For himself, the Advocate-General declared, he would treat as non-existent this mass of self-contradictory testimony, and reconstitute the case on the facts offered, and the facts alone.

With the coldness of the logician, as though to disgust the jury with the theatrical inconsequence of the other side, the speaker proceeded to reconstruct the circumstances of the crime. At the end he sat down, calm and secure.

Dujardin rose and began his plea for the defense. He argued with skill. But the ground had been cut from beneath his feet. Poor Rosalie, in her passionate attempt to save the life that her own criminal carelessness had placed in jeopardy, had overleaped her mark. Dujardin's discourse was in the main a disquisition on the uncertainty of circumstantial evidence, and the inconclusive quality of the government's case. He contended, first, that there was insufficient evidence to prove Livingston's presence in the room at the time of the crime; second, that there was insufficient evidence to prove that Tuharczin's death was the result of violence, and not of natural causes.

He sat down, however, at last, with the air of a man who sees his most ingenious efforts foredoomed, through no fault of his own, to certain defeat. The prisoner sat motionless. By contrast with what he had feared an hour ago, his own death seemed a trifling terror. But nature, though clamped down by the steel of resolution, stirred his whole being with her inarticulate rebellion. Outside the window he could see the green waving tree-tops, and the little clouds that chased each other across the summer sky. Life was sweet. And the guillotine, seen so close, was an ugly thing.

In a measured voice the president read off his questions to the jury. Livingston, surveying the twelve men with whom his fate lay, was seized with a kind of dumb panic. On a straight demand, "Guilty or not guilty?" it seemed to him he might have felt some hope; or had these men been Americans, he might at least have guessed at their processes of mind. But this maze of questions, with the subtle twists and turnings, seemed a net fabricated to catch him. And behind these twelve French faces moved a set of preconceived ideas, of fashions of reasoning and of judging which he could not fathom. How far was it possible then that they could fathom his, or perceive his actual innocence through the haze of evidence and of confession that obscured it? Then the thought of a possible acquittal and the possible consequences to one dearer to him than himself came back to his whirling brain. No, he was a doomed man, he could understand that; and he was not sorry. With lifted head he watched the jury file from the court room. Then between his two gendarmes he was conducted back to his antechamber to wait during the recess.

In the stifling little apartment, heated red-hot by the afternoon sun, he sat and waited. It seemed ages before a heavy hand touched his shoulder. "You're to come back to the hall, monsieur."

Mechanically, he rose and followed the gendarme, while the other walked behind him. The court room was already filled again, and the jury had returned to their places. His throat stirred, and he gulped a rebellious breath. These men had already decided upon his fate.

But the president's first words, after seating himself in the tribune, were not what Livingston had expected to hear.

"Messieurs of the jury: in accordance with precedent already established under the Code, I have called you back from your deliberations to hear new testimony, just now introduced into the case. You will hear it; and then the question upon it will be added to the list, and decided upon by you separately and independently of all preceding questions."

The foreman bowed. Then the president, raising his voice, pronounced the words:

"Call Arsène Ducloix."

Livingston stared excitedly. A tall, thin man, nervous and sour of aspect, was introduced at the witnesses' door and advanced hurriedly to the rail.

He took the oath. In response to the questions of the president, gave his residence as Paris, and his profession as doctor of medicine, specialist in diseases of the heart. It was at midnight last night that he had received the summons to Aix. With two other physicians, he had taken the three o'clock *rapide* from the Gare de Lyon, arriving

in this city at 10.30 this morning. As the trial had already begun, and Monsieur Martin, who had sent for him, was enclosed in the court room, he and his colleagues had had difficulty in performing their task. Finally, with the aid of the *juge d'instruction*, they had obtained admission to the receiving tomb, where lay the body of the deceased. Here another delay was imposed by the fact that, owing to the icy atmosphere of the vault, they were obliged to have the body removed to the local hospital for the performance of the autopsy.

"You performed the autopsy?"

"We did."

"What was the result?"

"We found that the deceased was a man who suffered from chronic valvular lesion. The cause of death was the bursting of the left valve, caused probably by mental excitement or some violent physical effort."

Livingston's head swam. He hardly heard the next question and answer:

"Then in your opinion it was this valvular lesion that was the cause of death, and not the blow upon the head?"

"The blow upon the head, which in itself would have been sufficient to cause death, could not have been inflicted before the accident to the heart, because the bursting of the valve is not a thing that could have occurred after the moment of death. It is, therefore, to be concluded that the blow on the head of the deceased followed, not preceded, the moment of death. It is entirely possible that the deceased, in his fall, struck his head against a sharp corner of furniture. In any case, it is my opinion, as well as that of my confrères Drs. Clayette and Willy, that the deceased was dead before his head had received the wound which we have just perceived upon it."

Livingston held up his head. But a mist swam before his eyes. He hardly saw the tall, thin form of the distinguished scientist as he hurried from the door; or heard the voices of Dr. Clayette and Dr. Willy of Paris, introduced one after the other to join their testimony in corroboration of their celebrated confrère.

The experts were withdrawn. The president framed his new question, to be added to the tail of the list already submitted to the jury.

The jurors withdrew. As the foreman reported the list of answers nearly completed, the court took no further recess, but sat and waited. Livingston's hopes, raised so high for the second time, fell back to zero. Was it possible that against the weight of circumstantial evidence, against the damning bungle made by the unfortunate Rosalie, the jury would let themselves be turned aside by the testimony of these indifferent Parisians who had flitted in like birds of passage and then flown again?

The wait seemed interminable. The heat was intense. The flies returned with a buzzing persistency. To Livingston, it seemed that death itself would be a relief after this sickness of suspense.

The door at the back of the hall opened, and the jury, weary and perspiring, filed in. The foreman advanced to the desk and laid a paper upon it. The president picked it up, cast a calm blue eye over it, and began in a measured voice to read aloud.

"Question I. Does the jury find that the accused had a motive of passion for the murder of the deceased? Answer, Yes."

"Question II. Does the jury find that the accused had a motive of avarice for the murder of the deceased? Answer, Yes."

"Question III. Does the jury find that the defense has succeeded in establishing an alibi in contending that the accused was absent from his room between the hours of 1.55 P.M., when he left the hotel, and of 6.15, when the witness Delille informed him of the presence of the Comtesse Tuharczin? Answer, No."

"Question IV. Does the jury find that the gold coin marked with the initials H. V. L., found clasped in the hand of the deceased, was torn by him from the person of the prisoner in the struggle immediately preceding the murder? Answer, Yes."

"Question V. Does the jury find that the spots of blood upon the suit of clothes proved to have been worn by the prisoner that afternoon were the blood of the deceased? Answer, Yes."

"Question VI. Does the jury find that the marks of blood discovered on the bludgeon found in the room of the accused were the blood of the deceased? Answer, Yes."

"Question VII. Does the jury find that the defense has succeeded in establishing its contention that the wound in the head of the deceased was made not with said bludgeon, but by striking the stone chimney-piece as he fell? Answer, No."

"Question VIII. Does the jury find that the defense has succeeded in establishing the contention as made by the witness Tuharczin, alias Kermesnil, that the death of the deceased was due not to violence but to natural causes? Answer, No."

"Question IX. Does the jury accept the deposition of the witness Tuharczin, alias Kermesnil, that she, unaided, removed the hundred kilos of gold from the trunk and placed the body of the deceased therein? Answer, No."

"Question X. Does the jury accept the deposition of the witness Tuharczin, alias Kermesnil, that the deceased died in her presence of violence inflicted by her hands? Answer, No."

"Question XI. Does the jury accept the avowal of the accused that the deceased died in his presence of a blow inflicted by his hands? Answer, Yes."

The president paused. Henry clenched his hands. Until now that it was extinguished, he had hardly realized how brightly had burned his hope of life. Poor Rosalie, how fatally she had muddled the disaster she had tried to mend!

Laying the folded paper upon the desk, the president picked up a second sheet. A puff of hot wind, drawing through the window, sent it fluttering to the floor. A sheriff and a gendarme made a dash for it, brought their heads together, and stopped to glare at each other. A ripple of nervous laughter went about the court room, and the prisoner smiled. Now that the great question of all was settled, trifles began to take on a strange interest. The president unfolded the second paper, cleared his throat, and read:

"The jury, being recalled to the court room for the hearing of further evidence, consider further:

"*Question XIII.* Does the jury accept the deposition of the witnesses Ducloux, Clayette, and Willy, that the deceased died not of physical violence, but of heart failure, induced by excitement; and that the wound on the head was the result not of a blow from the bludgeon, but of his fall after the moment of decease? *Answer, Yes.*"

Henry's eyes were fixed on that blue sky beyond the window. One thought only came into his mind: the sky was his again. He hardly heard the wild murmur, like a half-breathed cheer, that circled about the court room; or the calm voice of the president as he concluded:

"Therefore, in accordance with the finding of the jury that no murder was committed, that the deceased died a death due to natural causes, I declare that the prisoner is acquitted."

XX.

At nine o'clock the following evening, Henry awoke in his bedroom at the Hôtel des Etrangers. He had slept for nearly twenty-four hours—his first real sleep in weeks. He woke to a tingling sense of life, of security, of joy. The burden of horror was gone, and the looming peril of a shameful death. He was his own man once more, free to face the world as he chose. This was his first thought. His second was for Rosalie.

He leaped from his bed, to order his bath and dinner. On the tiled floor beside the door his eye caught sight of a small white oblong that had evidently been slipped under the door while he slept. He picked it up. It was a letter from Rosalie.

DEAR FRIEND [the letter said]:

Will you think me very strange if I ask you to meet me at the boat-landing of the lake, at half-past four to-morrow morning? I name this deserted place and early hour because of the crowds that stand looking at my window, and would annoy you if I asked you to come to me here. Five minutes is all I ask of you, to ask your pardon and to say good-by.

R.

To say good-by! In spite of the feebleness of the handwriting, the words were resolute enough. Henry's heart sank. Did she mean to return to the bondage from which she had escaped—did she mean to place her vows as a barrier between them? Whatever her decision might be, it was impossible that he should stay longer in this city where he had suffered so monstrously. He sent for Théophile and directed him to have the car in readiness for the start at five o'clock to-morrow morning. His desire to leave Aix had become a passion, hardly less than his passion for the woman he was to see perhaps for the last time. Was she also leaving Aix, as her letter would indicate? And if so, whither? The future was dark, but in any case he must escape from the town that had been his prison. He sent for the proprietor, and paid his bill; then packed his trunks, and lay down again for a brief sleep.

At twenty-five minutes past four, he sat waiting in his little fishing-skiff beside the boat-landing of the lake.

The morning air was fresh and clear. The sun, still hidden behind the dark mountains to the eastward, filled sky and landscape together with a pure saffron light. The dew hung on the bushes that fringed the quiet lake; and from the trees cooed and twittered the chorus of the waking birds. The place was, as Rosalie had said, well calculated for the meeting of two persons who had become public curiosities. Here was no voice but that of the birds, no eye but the fading stars. The very lake was motionless.

Suddenly he heard the rattle of wheels. They drew nearer, and a carriage appeared. A few eager strokes set Henry ashore, and he went forward to meet the conveyance. A young girl had just alighted from it, and stood with her valise at her feet, paying her driver. Henry's heart fell in a sick thud of disappointment. A second glance showed him that the young girl was Rosalie. It was the first time he had seen her divested of her heavy mourning, or the gaudy finery that the taste of her tormentor had purchased for her. The face that she lifted as he advanced was innocently sweet beneath her large straw hat, and she held out a little gray-gloved hand to him. They stood thus hand in hand while the carriage rattled away. Her strange confession of yesterday lay like a cold thought in Henry's heart. How far was that strange past of hers, which he so little understood, to be admitted as the destruction of their living love? What thoughts stirred in that resolute soul of hers, he could not divine.

Softly she withdrew her fingers from his clasp. His heart sank. Was his touch, like his very hopes, perhaps, to be regarded as a profanation?

"Will you come out in the boat, Rosalie?" he asked sadly. "We can talk better so."

"Yes," she answered. Her voice, though bearing traces of the recent furious strain, was soft and sweet; and the color had begun to come back into her thin face. She made a little movement toward the valise at her feet. "Will you help me take my bag, please?" she asked timidly.

In some surprise, Livingston lifted it. Its weight showed its contents to be the lump of money which already had been his bane, and which from beginning to end had lain at the root of all the trouble. Its touch produced in him an indefinable repulsion; but not so much, perhaps, as the sudden perception of the value attached to it by its owner. Whether dictated by prudence or by avarice, this care for money was a new idea of Rosalie's complex character. It did not attract him.

But when they were once in the boat and her soft face lifted to his in the pure morning light, he forgot everything but the joy of her presence.

"Rosalie," he cried, "Rosalie, my darling!"

She shook her head austere.

"No, my friend, it was not for that, believe me, that I asked you to meet me here. I know your kindness, your affection. But I know also what you must think of me *here*"—she touched her own forehead. "I know how you must judge me, the woman who has lied to you, who has dragged you through shame and infamy unspeakable. You remember I told you that day on the mountain, I was ashamed? If I was ashamed then, think what shame I must feel now!"

Livingston tried to reassure her. Her gesture commanded silence.

"No, please don't say that I have n't been wicked, because I have—do you think I don't know how wicked? But in the beginning I meant no harm—if I could only make you understand that!" She leaned toward him eagerly, and the rosy flush of the dawn kindled her white face. "I was a little fool—that was all. I wanted to see what the world was, to find for myself what life was! When I was a girl, you see, I had lived between four walls. My poor father had lost all his savings, and my mother's fortune as well, at gambling. Even when he was dying, there was his slate always on his bed—his slate marked off like a *trente-et-quarante* table, with all the numbers! And there he sat, propped up on the pillows, working out his system, till he grew too weak to hold the pencil any more. Then he made me calculate and mark for him—we were in the middle of working out the chances the night he died. Poor Papa! That was a sad death, was n't it? Then my poor little mamma was taken ill. There was no fortune left for me, so before she died she put me in the convent of Sainte-Anne, there at Plombec. Ah, do not think me too wicked, but I was never made to be a nun. How I hated

it, the long, silent days, and the winter mornings when the bell rang for prayers! I was only sixteen when I went there. It seemed to me that it was my grave. My father had told me of his youth, and of the world that lies outside Bretagne. Oh, how I longed to see it—how I longed for life, and kindness, and a little love and laughter! Then after two years came the soldiers, and broke open the doors of the convent and sent us away. The other sisters cried, but I laughed. How pretty the world looked that morning—how pretty! But soon I found it was a cruel world, too. I had no money. I had had no training to work. If it had not been for Captain Le Roux, I should have starved!”

Henry's heart stirred in a pang of doubt. “Captain Le Roux—who was he?”

“He was an old friend of my father's, and my godfather—so good, so good! I should like to show you his picture, but I seem to have lost it. He took me home with him to Brest, and said I should be his daughter. Then his nephew came for a visit from Paris.” She paused and shuddered. Henry frowned.

“Hector Le Roux?”

“Yes, Hector. Oh, how angry he was when he found me there! For he wished to be his uncle's heir, himself. Then one night when he had taken too much absinthe he went into his uncle's cabinet and they had a dispute. What Hector said I did not know, but his uncle turned him from the house, and he went back to Paris. The next year, my dear godpapa died. Ah, how good he was! And when his will was read, it was found that he had left me all his fortune—eighty thousand francs.”

“What did Hector say then?”

“I cannot tell you.” She shivered. “He had come down from Paris to the village, you see, to hear the will read. When he found he received nothing he went into a passion. He said wicked things, shameful things, about his uncle and me—things that I could not even understand at first. My dear godpapa, older than my father, and good like a saint! Go to Plombec, Henri, and you will hear what people say of Captain Le Roux—and what they say of poor Rose Kermesnil! A wild, foolish girl, perhaps, but not wicked—oh, Henri, not wicked, in spite of what Hector said! But I did n't stop to think that perhaps people would believe me instead of him. When he said I must marry him, or he would tell every one in the village that I was a sinful woman, I never thought of staying to fight him with the truth. It was all horror, the very streets of Plombec, and the house where my kind old godpapa and I had been so happy. I could n't live there another hour. I had to get away—anywhere, away from that horrible grin of Hector's! So the next day, very early, I

went to the lawyer and asked for my money. That night I took the train for Paris."

"Poor little lost child! What did you do in Paris?"

"I hid from Hector. I was so afraid of him, so horribly afraid! Then the idea came to me—it came one windy night when I lay awake in my little room in the rue du Cherche-Midi. I thought, why hide here in a little room which was just the kind of place where Hector would expect to find me—why not hide from him more completely, and see the life that I longed for, at the same time? I was a long time making up my plans, Henri. I was afraid, and the world was so strange to me! But I remembered the tales my godfather had told me of Servia, where he had been in the French service. The names came back to me, ideas came to me. I remembered romances I had read, when my poor mamma did not see; I remembered the tales my papa had told me of his youth, and of Aix-les-Bains, and of the trente-et-quarante. After all, it seemed no harm! I decided that I would take thirty thousand francs of my inheritance, and go to Aix, and live for a month like a lady of the great world, and that it would be like stepping into fairyland! Little imbecile! So I called myself by the name which you know, and hired Thérèse, and came here to Aix. But oh! how different it was from my dream! Every one looked so hard, and so cold, and so tired. The way the men looked at me—it made me afraid! And I remembered what Hector had said, that one could read in my eyes that I was not a good girl. And I was not! That was the terrible part of it; for I was a pretender, a little bourgeoisie from Bretagne, pretending to be a comtesse—a nun back in the world again, an impostor through and through! Ah, Henri, it was very miserable, the holiday I had looked forward to with so much joy! Though the English ladies that I had met at the baths were kind to me, still I remembered always how they would despise the poor little Comtesse Tuharczin if they knew what she really was! And always, always, I trembled lest at the turning of the street I should meet Hector. I hired an automobile, so as to be ready to run away if he came. But before he came—I met you."

She took a long breath, and the tears came suddenly in her eyes.

"No, Henri, do not say the kind words I see on your lips—it was a sad, sad day for you! But for me it was joy itself. I lay awake at night, to have the joy of thinking of you! I had never seen any one like you before, except perhaps my godpapa. But you were young and—and different. It made me happy just to see you looking at me! Though all the time I said to myself, what would he say if he knew my very name was a lie! Then came that night at the tables—you know what that night was to me—I have told you. But oh, Henri, the nights that have been since!"

She stretched out her hands with a little imploring cry. Henry leaned toward her ardently; but she snatched back her hands in a gesture of resolution.

"No, you shall never touch them again. There's blood on them!"

"But not of your shedding!"

"But it's there, just the same. These hands—think of the work they've done! They've written lies, they've gambled for money—was n't that bad enough? But now they've handled the dead. They have laid an impious touch on the dead—the wicked dead."

Horror was in her voice; horror was in her eyes. "There are some things a woman does," she said, "that make her not a good woman any more." Her voice went low. "But there are other things that make her not even a woman any more. And those are such things as I have done. Though when I was doing them, Henri, I swear to you that I thought I was doing right—I thought I was saving you."

Livingston could contain himself no longer. "Rosalie, my darling!" he cried. "My brave darling! Did you think I would shrink from you because you did what few men would dare to do, in the hope of saving me? You took all risk upon yourself in order to spare me; you offered your life for mine——"

"Don't, Henri!" she interrupted him in tones of suffering. "You say, to spare you! What did I spare you, and what did I drag you into? When I think my blunder might have cost you your life——" She shuddered, then resumed with determination: "No, I'm not fit to touch your feet! But before I go away I want to make you believe how deep is my repentance, how sincere my shame!"

She stooped and touched the solidly-packed valise at her feet.

"Here it is, the cause of all this misery," she said—"the million francs whose winning made me appear in your eyes like a common gambler, a common cocotte! It was through this money that my picture was put in the paper, and Hector saw it in far-off Plombec, and came to Aix and found me. It was to seek this money that he went to your room; it was in fighting for it that he died. It was the presence of this money in your room that made them believe you a murderer—from the beginning to the end, this money has had a curse upon it. This curse at least I can throw off. Look, Henri!"

She stooped. Her thin arms stiffened as she gripped the handles of the valise. The skiff careened violently; then a heavy splash sent drops flying in over the gunwale. An instant later the ripples were creeping away in circles from the slowly rising bubbles.

"Rosalie!" cried Henry, aghast. "Your million francs!"

She surveyed the bubbles with grim satisfaction. "It is gone," she said. "Its work of wreck and ruin is done. Never again, never

again, till the sea gives up its dead." She turned to him with sudden passionate earnestness. "Now, Henri," she said, "now at last you believe in my sincerity, in my repentance and my shame?"

"Rosalie, I love you. That is all I know. Your love is all I ask."

"Dear friend, do not tempt me. I am weak, and I might yield. Take me ashore, let me say good-by!"

But he snatched the oars from her hands. "Rosalie, tell me why you are so determined to go? Is your religion so cruel—do you really believe that God can be so hard? Look at this lovely world—look at me who loves you! After all, your vows were dissolved by the government——"

"My vows?" she cried. "But I never took the final vows! If I had—*mon Dieu*, for what do you take me? I was a novice, a novice of two years only, when the soldiers came to Sainte-Anne——"

"Then why do you leave me?" he cried.

"Do you think," she answered, "that I would permit you to marry the woman that dragged you through the hell of last week?"

"But you can give me heaven in recompense," he answered passionately. "Rosalie, do you still refuse?"

She took a long breath and clenched her hands; then, with a little cry of unutterable affection, held out her arms to him. The skiff rocked, then was very still on the glassy water. In Livingston's arms Rosalie lay with the soft relaxation of a tired child. But all the sweetness of her womanhood was in the lips that she raised to meet his.



"WHEN FROM A QUIET HOUR WITH THEE"

BY ARTHUR WALLACE PEACH

WHEN from a quiet hour with thee
I enter life's great marketways,
Where surge the ceaseless tides of men
Forever through the days,
I often wonder at the peace
I find within my heart
While all around is din and stir
In which I must bear part;
But never far my thought need seek—
The love thou gavest me
Lays on each hour of strife and toil
A benedicite!

A "LEADING OF PROVIDENCE"

By Jennie Brooks

'T WAS a hazy, lazy afternoon, just the day to wander along sleepy roads and climb distant hills, following flit of wing and tone of bird; but, though "Riley" is companionable to a degree, I wanted some one along who could share my enthusiasm, and who might also serve as a pillow for me should Riley's prances on the sheer precipice at the bridge-end carry us into the yellow water of the "Kaw." But to my invitation, with one accord, came answer from friends, "I pray thee, have *me* excused!"

Now, there were roads innumerable, tree-bordered, leading out of the little town. "Blue Mound" way was one, "Eudora Road" another, the old "Santa Fé Trail," running toward the sunset; and for months I had not thought of crossing onto the other side. Why, then, should it on this day seem so imperative a thing to do? He alone knew, Who allows not even a dusty little sparrow to fall without His knowledge.

Almost, I had turned about for home, when a town-weary friend came in sight, her wits a-dust with the powdery whirlings from asphalt, but her heart a-dream with primroses!

"To cross the river? Yes, oh, yes, to the greenhouse on that side!" came joyous response. "I want some flowers."

Flowers, indeed! "No botanical excursion is this, but a bird-hunt—away off beyond those misty hills!" I tempted.

Faint acquiescence from my friend, but ever and anon, as we rode along, came to my ear the wistful murmur: "I should have liked to have the flowers!"

"Oh, why did I ask her?" I pondered impatiently. "Thus to spoil my day." But "Riley" stubbornly kept his chosen road, and I was determined to have my own way.

"Just beyond the hills," I urged.

"It's primrose time," came melancholy reply.

I looked into her disappointed face. Well—I have "Riley" every day; every day *she* walks. Jerk go the reins, and we jog over wide

fields, "across lots" to the greenhouse. With mighty poor grace, I gave up. No birds to-day, that's certain!

Hot, sandy, sun-baked, lay the flat land, a wide waste of one-time flooded pasture, but we finally reached our destination, hitched "Riley" to a one-rail fence, and alighted.

Happy, now she had her own way, my friend went up to meet the Mistress of the Flowers, while I remained discontentedly outside, digging the toe of my shoe into the sand, and grumbling into "Riley's" attentive ear.

Flutter of wing, and cry of bird! It smote my heart as quickly as my ear. Alert in an instant was I.

Entirely an unrecognizable tone it was, but I scrambled wildly through the wicket gate, up the wooden steps, and flew around the house, following the terrible call.

Only a beautiful, distraught male cardinal bird beating his life out against the bars of a tiny cage!

I almost fell on my knees. The Lord really knew better than I how my afternoon was to be spent!

How he suffered—that bird! Absolutely crazed with fear, his eyes wild and staring, feathers torn and ragged, besmirched with blood, from his frantic efforts to escape a prison all too small, all too wicked, in its confinement of such a royal prisoner!

"T'chip! T'chip!" With his own friendly note I tried to soothe him, but he was so beside himself with fear that he could not recognize a friend, and, like a sobbing child, could not stop the hoarse, choking notes that crowded from his throat—notes of such anguish as I had never, in my years of bird-work, been unfortunate enough to hear!

I looked helplessly on, watching him flutter and fly and beat his panting red breast against the imprisoning wires. I knew nothing just then of the laws of that State concerning "our little brothers of the air."

Came, then, with her primroses, this erstwhile messenger of God. Primroses—magic flower of allurements, destined for the green earth-bed of one much loved. I wonder if what followed on this flower-quest made for that one, in Paradise, a single day "that is as a thousand years"—a single day one degree happier?

"How do you happen to have a red-bird caged?" in smoothest tones of conciliation I asked the proprietress.

"Well, he flew into the greenhouse after the flowers, and I just caught him with my hand and shut him up. I had another one a few years ago, and I sold him for five dollars," was the defensive reply.

My primrose friend and I stood amazed. Making money out of such agony!

"It's wicked to shut up such a bird," I said. "I will buy him and set him free, but I have only fifty cents in my purse."

"Indeed, he don't go for that!" was the sullen answer. "I've already had an offer of three dollars for him."

"From whom?"

"The newsboy."

This tale seemed to me most unlikely.

"How long has he been in there?" we asked.

"Since yesterday—and he ain't et a thing, or drank!"

We could not set him free, though I offered to send her a dollar.

For two dollars and a half she would sell him—poor, helpless victim!

Shame to tell, we went away; but in retribution, his piercing, anguished cries rang in my ears all through the long wakeful hours of the night, and, through closed lids, I yet could see that bird beating himself to death. A cardinal bird! How could I ever have left him?

Close "kin" was he to those birds on the window-ledge at home, so gay, so confident, such friends, such joy-givers for years to that "friend of the birds"; her one great delight their notes, their nests, their youngsters; five years of happiness and eager interest for her who was stepping through a gentle and lovely old age to heavenly—not mansions, but gardens.

And who had mourned her more truly, or who had missed her longer, than the little birds in the pink peach tree just outside her window?

And, among all this crowd of feathered folk whose questing in that April-time evoked my tears, who had been more faithful than those darling cardinals—a few sweet years our tenants?

But how not alone to rescue this bird, but to prevent the capture of other cardinals?

Certain Kansas University bird-men assured me by 'phone that there was no "law to fit the case"; others said there was a law; others bade me "bluff it out," and cheered me on to "free him at any price." So much for "menfolk"!

But there was a certain courageous little "Humane Society" person whom I might consult. This person, all on fire with indignation, forthwith consults a learned Judge, who points out the law and arms her with a ponderous tome, and sends us on our rescue, wrathful but rejoicing!

However, before this, she had gone to the Mayor, who approved her action, but said that a writ must be issued and a lot of "blue-tape" cut before anything could be done. Meanwhile, the bird would die, as I had heard of such deaths after but two hours of confinement!

A Legislator said: "There is no law to free that bird. The bird is the property of the woman who captured him. It's a shame, but you can't touch him!" So much for one who *makes* the laws.

But "She of the Tender Heart" tucked the fat law-book under her arm, and "Riley" carried us back to the Place of Anguish.

I said, "Let me *buy* the bird, and then you read the law to her," and, coward that I am, this very thing I did, for we found the bird still alive, I am thankful to say, and his captor much amazed at our return.

"Will you sell me the bird for one dollar?" I asked, though I had come with a blank check.

Now, should the evidently exhausted cardinal die on her hands before she could sell him, she would be at a total loss; so, with a bad grace, she accepted my offer.

Into the cage went a careless hand, and roughly dragged out the little prisoner, whose screams of fear were echoed in the screams of a child who clung about the Flower-woman's knees in an anguish of terror at the bird's suffering.

"She of the Tender Heart," armed with her law-book, stood scarlet with wrath and tearful with sympathy, and when I had made my escape to the out-of-doors with the now quiet cardinal safely cuddled in the gloom of my wicker basket, the "tender-hearted" but firm laid down the law covering song-birds as it was to be read in the Statutes of Kansas, ending with, "We'll let you off this time, but if we ever catch you again caging a song-bird, you will be prosecuted to the full extent of the *law*!"

'T was a joyful home-coming! Even "Riley" shared our enthusiasm and brought us gaily clattering down the main street.

The old Judge, stately of mien, courteous of manner, descended his stone steps to receive his law-book, to peep into our basket, and to announce in ardent tones: "The *pen*, madam, is mightier than the sword!"—an endorsement I was heartily glad of, for "She of the Tender Heart" does not temper justice with mercy, and in our interview with the Flower-lady I had expected, every instant, to hear her exclaim, with Alice's Queen: "Off with her head!"

The Legislator, suave, politic, hurried from his office crying, "Did you get him?" and the venerable, white-haired Mayor, laughing, delighted, stumped across the street with his cane. "Well, well, well, well! That's *good*! Let me see him."

The occupant of our willow-basket acquitted himself well. As man after man peeped in at him, he greeted each with his optimistic note, "T'chip! T'chip!"

Out to beautiful "Sunnyside" we carried him, up under the big elms to the south porch. There, in the golden light of a dropping sun,

we opened wide our basket. Absolutely still sat the little prisoner.
 "T'chip! T'chip!"

"She of the Tender Heart" baptized the bird with happy tears, and I of the Accusing Conscience, laying my hand softly upon him, said, "Because of that 'Friend of the Birds' who loved you, old fellow, you are going to have a beautiful time—and you are free!" and I lifted him out, opened wide my hand, and, without a tremor of fear, he flew into a little peach tree directly in front of us. He preened himself, shook out his feathers, and, in wide flight, he rose on glad wings to the highest elm tree-top, and sang, and sang, and sang!

Did our cardinal win him a wife, and build in the trumpet-vine?

Perhaps—who knows? Or did he tempt that Providence that had befriended him and go winging his way over the river to old home scenes? Who can tell? A cardinal *did* build that summer, in the trumpet-vine, and I like to think it was an act of gratitude.



THE RECALL

BY JOHN KENDRICK BANGS

I WOULD that there might be
 Two lives on earth
 For those of us who see
 Too late its worth.

The first, a study hour
 To learn its ways;
 To comprehend the power
 Of passing days;

To find life's deepest reach—
 The things that give
 The Soul its strength, and teach
 Us How to Live!

The second, that the Soul
 May nobly rise,
 Prepared to win the goal
 Where Honor lives.

What joy to know 'mid all
 Life's stress and pain
 We but await the call
 To try again!

A SPRUCE-STREET ADVENTURE

By Clifford Howard

THOSE of you who live in Philadelphia and have heard of Miss Mackerel—Miss Ethel Mackerel—not only know that her name is accented on the last syllable (thereby delicately enhancing its face value), but you also know that she is an exceptionally dignified and cultured young lady.

Both of these facts regarding Miss Mackerel I learned for the first time when, as a stranger in the city, I was on the eve of calling upon her at the request of my sister Rebecca. When Rebecca learned that I had gone to live in Philadelphia, she at once wrote to me that I must meet her old school friend, as through her I could gain entrance to the best and most exclusive circles of Philadelphia society. Also, at the same time, she wrote to Ethel that I was here and would call upon her.

Rebecca has always been ambitious for me; and as much to please her as to advance my own interests, I undertook to call on Miss Mackerel.

It was by no means a comfortable task for me. I am naturally a timid man, particularly in the company of fastidious women. Perhaps I am too self-conscious. At all events, when the evening arrived on which I had arranged to call on Miss Mackerel I really was quite nervous. I am always more or less nervous when preparing for a social call, and such scraps of information as I had gathered concerning the present young lady contributed much to my customary agitation.

In the first place, she lived in a most aristocratic neighborhood—on Spruce Street, to be exact; and those of you who live west of the Mississippi will realize what this means when I tell you that the mere tone in which I first heard this street mentioned by an old Philadelphian prompted me to lift my hat. And, in the second place, I had learned that this aristocratic young lady was not only exceptionally dignified and cultured, but that she was also extremely critical. Herself a marvel of good breeding and punctilio, she admitted to her enviable

circle of acquaintances only such as could measure up to her exacting standard of cultivation.

It is small wonder, therefore, that I approached her house in a state of trepidation. The fear lest I should fail to make a favorable impression and thereby ruin the social opportunities that lay open to me through her Spruce-Street doorway, quite unnerved me. Were I a ready conversationalist or an adept in the niceties of conventional society, I should not have flinched; but, having a mere modicum of ceremonial experience to draw upon, and being by nature both meek and bashful and constitutionally deficient in the nimble graces of parlor finesse, I could not but anticipate the ordeal with many doubts and misgivings.

I know now I should have responded to my intuitions and stayed away. As it was, however, I rashly determined to overcome my fears, and the result was only what might have been expected.

To begin with, I encountered a dog. Next to a snake, there is nothing that so utterly terrifies me as a dog. This particular one was a fox terrier, and he was guarding Miss Mackerel's house. He was lying on the broad marble top of the front steps, and as I approached and showed signs of wanting to come up, he growled at me.

I thought that if I walked on down to the end of the block and came back later, he might in the meantime be called in. So I sauntered by and went to the next corner; and by and by I walked back again—on the opposite side of the street. The dog was still lying on the step. It was already quarter of nine, and I thought it would be foolish to wait around any longer, in the hope of having the dog go inside. I felt, also, that it would be wiser for me to go home, but I regarded this as unbecoming, and accordingly I crossed the street, grasping my cane in the middle and endeavoring to ignore the shivers that beset me.

I have found that most dogs respond more or less pleasantly to the name of Buster, and accordingly I called this one Buster, and spoke to him in such a way as to impress him with the belief that I loved him. At the sound of my voice he got up and wagged what was left of his tail, which I interpreted as a good omen. In spite of my fears, therefore, I mounted the steps and rang the bell, while Buster nosed about my legs, alternately whining and snorting.

I expected every moment he would bite me, and it was therefore a decided relief when the maid opened the door. I devoutly hoped she would not permit Buster to come in, for I knew I should not be able to do myself justice as a caller if I had constantly hanging over me the knowledge that there was a dog loose in the house. However, Buster at once squeezed in between me and the doorpost, and though the maid did make some sort of a hasty attempt to close him out she did not insist upon it; and Buster, looking upon me as the means of

getting him into the house, showed his gratitude by jumping up at me and leaving the mark of a dirty paw on my shirt-bosom. I did not like to offer any protest before the maid, so I merely smiled and in a tone of bewitching playfulness called him a naughty dog.

As a result of this show of friendliness, he insisted upon coming into the parlor with me, where he continued to jump about me and sniff at my shoes. I longed desperately to give him a kick; but I was afraid. And, besides, it would not have been proper. As an inmate of Miss Mackerel's house, the dog was immune from all harm or outward criticism on the part of a guest. That, I believe, is one of the canons of etiquette. Nevertheless, I did venture to assume a sudden harshness of voice and tell him to get out. But he immediately barked at me and threw me into a perfect chill of terror. My only hope of relief, therefore, lay in the coming of his mistress. Surely, she would order him out. But no, she did not. She indulged his presence with a composure no less dignified and unruffled than that with which she accepted the presence of the piano or myself. In fact, when she came in she made no comment upon him at all, except to remark graciously, as he leaped up on my lap and snapped at my *boutonnière*, that I was evidently fond of dogs. Of course, in order to be polite, I told her I was—especially of fox terriers; and that she might believe I admired her pet in particular, I courageously touched him on the head and stammered some feeble compliment about his aristocratic face; after which he jumped down and began sniffing about the room.

My nervousness because of the dog almost wholly unfitted me for any discriminating appraisal of Miss Mackerel and her elegant surroundings. I merely realized that she was a tall, slender woman, of the Du Maurier type, very tastefully attired, and possessed of a manner that was scrupulously polite, but uncomfortably cold and formal.

Had she proved in any way approachable or sympathetic, I should have been tempted to confess my weakness and ask her to remove the dog. As it was, however, she proved even more dignified than I had anticipated, and consequently I did not dare make any reference to the beast. I held my knees pressed tightly together, so that she might not see how they shook, and did the best I could to appear at ease while keeping up my end of the conversation.

I think we talked mainly about books. I am not sure. Most of my remarks were automatic. My thoughts were centred on the dog. While I was obliged to keep my eyes on my hostess, I followed the dog with my ears and my nerves.

For a time he roamed aimlessly about the parlor, wheezing and snorting and making various other noises which no doubt belong of right to a dog, but which, to my mind, were certainly not in keeping

with the elegance of the room. Miss Mackerel, however, utterly ignored him, as most persons do who are accustomed to dogs and like to have them about. Two or three times he crawled under my chair and bit at my heels. If only Miss Mackerel had smiled or commented upon it, I should have found a certain measure of relief, but she kept right on with her well-bred, impersonal talk, accepting the dog's attentions to me as a matter of course, and leaving me to shiver with fear while maintaining a pleased and gracious expression.

Suddenly, however, the dog interrupted the conversation by knocking over the fire irons. The noise was so startling that I could not restrain an exclamation of alarm. Miss Mackerel, however, remained beautifully calm. She turned her head slowly in the direction of the fireplace, but offered no remark. From this I judged that upsetting the tongs and shovel was one of the dog's familiar tricks, for which no explanation or apology was considered necessary.

"Allow me to pick them up," I volunteered, starting to rise.

"It is not necessary," she answered quietly; "the maid will attend to them," and forthwith she went on with her discussion of "The History of Christian Science."

After this the dog remained quiet for several minutes. I think he got up on a chair when the things fell down, and I hoped he would stay there. But presently I heard him jump down and begin mousing about the room again. He stopped for awhile under the piano, smelling noisily at something on the floor, and then came over to me and nipped at my shoe-laces. I did my best to follow Miss Mackerel's example and appear calmly insensible to his whereabouts. Suddenly the brute snatched my handkerchief from my hand and dashed off with it to the other end of the room.

I said, "Ha, ha! He's a clever dog." I really felt I ought to say something. The cue was so obvious.

Miss Mackerel smiled approvingly. "Yes?" she answered graciously, as though pleased, and then went on talking.

I saw the dog go into a corner, out of Miss Mackerel's sight, and chew up my handkerchief; growling the while savagely and turning to cast an occasional vicious look at me, as though to warn me to keep this matter to myself. And, of course, I was careful not to say anything about it. I was more than willing he should have my handkerchief, if he would only stay away and let *me* alone.

Near the corner in which he had ensconced himself was a dainty mahogany table, supported on a slender pedestal with three claw-feet. Upon the table was a pale-blue vase containing an exquisite pink Maman Cochet. From the way the dog was fussing and backing around in the corner, I felt certain that sooner or later he would knock the table over. And, sure enough, that is what he did. The table sud-

denly tilted, lost its balance, and came down with a bang, throwing the vase to the floor and breaking it; while the dog, with two or three sharp barks, scampered under a near-by sofa.

"Goodness me! this is really too bad!" I exclaimed involuntarily; and I arose immediately to pick up the table.

"Please do not disturb yourself," commanded Miss Mackerel, with perfect evenness; "the maid will attend to it," and she touched a button in the wall within reach of her chair.

"Of course," thought I, "it is her vase and her dog, and if she is agreeable to this sort of thing it is none of my concern." Nevertheless, her perfect coolness and her persistent indifference to the vulgar behavior of her pet seemed to me to be carrying dignity beyond the limits of endurance. It certainly tended in no way to relieve my distressing embarrassment and uneasiness, and I made up my mind then and there that if the dog did not go, I would. I simply could no longer endure the torture of his presence and his unholy antics. There was no telling what he might do next.

The maid entered, and Miss Mackerel quietly ordered her to pick up the table and remove the vase, the rose, and the spilled water.

"I hope it was not a valuable vase," I ventured, as the maid gathered up the pieces.

"Yes," responded Miss Mackerel; "it was quite a valuable vase—a rare bit of *Cloisonné*. I brought it with me from Japan last year. Are you interested in ceramics?" and without further reference to the catastrophe she led the conversation back into impersonal channels.

However, with a little manœuvring, I succeeded shortly in making a more or less polite move to go. "But before going," I said, "may I not request the pleasure of a song? Rebecca has written me of your musical gifts and insisted that I must hear you sing."

I should not have braved this request had it not been that the dog had remained quietly under the sofa, with no sign of again coming out, and that I felt it a duty to Rebecca to ask Miss Mackerel to sing. Perhaps, too, I thought, it might serve to break the ice, for surely up to this time Miss Mackerel had given no indication of unbending, and I could not but feel that I had failed to make a favorable impression.

Somewhat to my surprise, Miss Mackerel promptly acquiesced, and, without asking me for an expression of my preference, sat down at the piano and began at once a bewitching little Spanish song.

She had scarcely finished three bars of it, however, when the most unearthly howl broke loose from under the sofa. It was a long-drawn, excruciating wail, blood-curdling in its pain and intensity.

Miss Mackerel stopped and turned slowly about. "He is not on the pitch," she remarked serenely, "and perhaps we had better let him sing alone." She got up gracefully and moved over to her chair.

I too arose. Her lofty and unruffled patience with the dog was more than I could comprehend. It completely flustered me. I stammered an awkward expression of regret, and in my confusion I blurted out some highly disparaging remark about the brute under the sofa. It was inexcusable, of course; but I could not help it.

Miss Mackerel smiled coldly and held out her hand. "Remember me to your sister when you write to her," she said; and that is all she did say by way of valediction. She did not say she was glad to know me. She did not ask me to call again. I felt intuitively that my visit had been a failure. I was not to be numbered among the elect of Spruce Street. I felt it in her tone, in her hand-shake, in her manner—all beautifully civil and proper, but informing me, nevertheless, that I was *persona non grata*.

She dismissed me at the parlor door. She did not come into the hall with me; but the dog did. When he heard that I was going, he came out from under the sofa, and as soon as he had me alone in the hall he frightened me almost stiff by springing at my ear and barking furiously. And as soon as I opened the front door he rushed out with me, snapping and biting at my heels.

My terror turned to sudden, frenzied desperation. I had no sooner reached the sidewalk than I turned with an unholy shout of madness and struck the beast a terrific crack with my cane.

It sent him sprawling into the gutter. I expected he would get up at once and come after me; but he did nothing of the sort. Profaning the night with a series of ear-splitting yelps, he dashed wildly across the street and disappeared in the darkness.

I was about to move on when the door opened and Miss Mackerel's maid came hurriedly down the steps, carrying a leather collar in her hand.

"Miss Mackerel told me to give you this," she said curtly, handing me the collar. "Your dog dropped it on the floor."

"My dog!" I ejaculated. "What do you mean?"

"Why, the dog you brought in with you this evening, sir," returned the maid, with an ill-concealed note of scorn; and thereupon she turned her back upon me and walked into the house.

The following morning I wrote a note of explanation and apology to Miss Mackerel, but I have never again called upon her.



CONSCIENCE MONEY

By Ella Middleton Tybout

Author of "The Smuggler," "The Little Brown Shoe," etc.

MISS WETHERBY counted money in the Redemption Division of the Treasury Department. Moreover, she had counted it for twenty-five years, which is quite a slice out of one's lifetime, taking it all in all. She had spent those years in a swivel-chair in the basement of the Treasury building, and had worn holes in several cushions as the days came and went.

Filthy lucre it was indeed she handled. Notes worn out in service came back to her for final counting when condemned for circulation and sentenced to destruction.

"Sometimes, my dear," confided Miss Wetherby to a sympathetic listener, "I shrink from touching them. I do indeed."

And it was not strange that she shrank from her daily task. Limp, mutilated, and inconceivably dirty were the notes that had started forth so crisp and clean. It almost seemed as if they had returned dejected and humiliated from their encounter with the world. Certainly they were scarred, battered, and badly worsted by the conflict, even as unsuccessful mortals are exhausted by the fray and unable to cope with the inequalities of life. A bank-note must be very bad indeed to be pronounced unfit for use.

Through the days of the week Miss Wetherby was a counting machine, and existed; at night and on Sundays she was a woman, and lived—not quite as other women, perhaps, for she who goes forth daily to earn her bread is widely separated from her who eats the bread that others earn; but still a woman with something to love and live for.

"I think," remarked a neighbor in the Redemption Division, "it is outrageous for you to have to support another woman's children. I don't see how you can endure it so patiently."

"Endure it!" Miss Wetherby's mild blue eyes grew large with astonishment. "Endure it! Alicia's children!"

"Oh, well, of course she was your sister, and all that. But you can't deny they are a constant expense and anxiety."

Miss Wetherby did not deny it. She lost herself momentarily in retrospection. Expense and anxiety—yes, that was true. Alicia's chil-

dren were that, and something more. She pondered gravely, then her thin, middle-aged face became suddenly luminous, as she laid her hand upon another package of notes.

"Yes," she said; "yes, that's all true. But, then, can't you see? I have something to *go home to*."

And the other woman, who lived alone in a third-floor back, became suddenly silent and counted industriously.

Something to go home to! After all, is not that the key-note of life?

Alicia's children had come to Miss Wetherby when the boy and the girl were six and four years old, respectively. At that age they were altogether charming, and, given food, warmth, and unlimited love, had no further demands to make upon life. Now they were eighteen and sixteen, and, while still undeniably charming, their demands were less moderate.

The Treasury Department paid Miss Wetherby seventy-five dollars a month. Alicia's legacy brought her love in plenty, but nothing at all in hard cash. Hence the problems of existence became very puzzling.

Robert had graduated at the High School, and Miss Wetherby had visions of West Point for him, having a deep-rooted conviction that he was destined to defend his country in time of stress, and ornament it when peace prevailed. Meanwhile, the boy grew apace, and developed critical faculties regarding neckties and hosiery. Little Alicia still went to school, but she too had reached the period of adolescence. Her skirts were longer, and she received callers in the evenings.

"I don't understand it," mused Miss Wetherby, fingering her pay envelope. "There used to be enough, but now everything is changed."

There was not enough. Robert, frowning over a denied request involving the expenditure of five dollars, announced his determination of becoming self-supporting and independent.

Miss Wetherby carried a heavy heart to the Treasury Department next day. For the first time, the personal equation entered into her soul with regard to the money she counted. Those ragged, dirty notes, destined to be ground into nothingness—what would a few of them mean to her?

"Ah, well," she sighed, "there's no use wishing."

That night Robert, sulkily triumphant, announced that he had obtained employment with a real-estate firm.

"A chap I know got me in," he boasted. "I'll be no more expense to you, Aunt Mary."

"Oh, Robert dear! And your West Point appointment promised!"

Robert carelessly lit a cigarette and assumed a manly attitude.

"I might as well tell you, Aunt Mary, that I'm not going to West Point. What's the Army anyhow? I'm going into business."

Thus was one more castle in the air shattered and crumbled into dust.

Robert received twenty-five dollars a month for his services, and felt himself a capitalist. In the first flush of his independence, he had asked his aunt what board she expected, pulling out his roll of five-dollar bills with the casual manner of one accustomed to deal with much larger matters. Her eager and almost tearful repudiation of the money, he accepted with a careless "Oh, well, all right—if *that's* the way you feel about it."

And Miss Wetherby straightway began having much better dinners than she could afford, because Robert, having wished to pay his board, might go elsewhere if the food were not to his liking.

The world is full of Miss Wetherbys, and the weakness of their love has helped to wreck many lives. But, then, too, it may shine out like a beacon and bring safely home one whose wandering feet would otherwise have stumbled and fallen in the dark byways of life. Who knows?

So time slipped away. Little Alicia had a new party frock, and Robert celebrated his nineteenth birthday. This celebration took place down-town, and his aunt and his sister were not invited to attend.

Time passed. Miss Wetherby counted money all day in the Treasury, and took to counting it in her dreams at night, in a vain effort to make her receipts equal her expenditures.

One day a note, worn to dissolution, fell out of the bundle after she had recorded her count, and she passed on her package of money without seeing it. All bundles of condemned notes are cut in two, and each half is counted by a different person. If the counts do not agree, there is investigation; if they do, the money is ground into pulp.

In straightening her desk preparatory to going home, Miss Wetherby discovered the fragment and carefully placed it in a drawer. Tomorrow she would see that it reached its proper destination, but for to-night it would be quite safe.

She dined with Alicia, the third place at the little table being unfilled, and the food was ashes to her. Alicia grumbled a little about her brother's freedom.

"He goes where he pleases, Aunt Mary, and you never say a word to *him*. I'll bet anything he went to Benning this afternoon."

"My dear!" Miss Wetherby was startled, the idea not having occurred to her before.

Alicia persisted.

"Well, I do think so. He's always talking about the races, and I heard him tell Joe Ridgway he could pick the winning horse every time. I wish you'd let *me* go, Aunt Mary. Need we have rice-pudding quite so often, and don't you think I'm old enough to have coffee after dinner?"

Miss Wetherby made no reply. She was staring at the empty place with a curiously strained expression. Robert's father, she remembered, had also been sure of his ability to select the winner, and, indeed, had often done so. Once, however he had staked all and failed.

Long after Alicia had gone to bed, Miss Wetherby sat in the tiny parlor, her hands clasped in her lap. She seemed to know what to expect, and had no censure for the lad for whom she waited; only love and commiseration.

"Perhaps," she reflected, with her customary optimism, "if he loses all his earnings now, it will be a lesson to him and save trouble after a while. I hope he won't win—that would encourage him to keep on."

Robert did not win. When at last the door opened and the boy entered, with lagging footstep and a furtive air that told its own story, Miss Wetherby asked no questions. She watched him pass into his own room, and heard him cast himself upon the bed. Should she go to him? She did not know. Robert had not encouraged demonstrations of affection lately. So she waited silently until she could endure it no longer, and then went in.

"Robert," she said, "what is it?"

It was no longer the man of the world to whom she spoke, but a wretched boy, who clutched her hand tightly, feeling that a port of any sort is not to be despised during a storm.

"What is it?" she repeated.

Then he told her, his face pressed into the pillow and his voice muffled and indistinct. Once she interrupted him:

"I don't understand. You say you *took* money. Surely, surely—oh, Robert, not *that*!"

It was the old story. The real-estate firm by whom he was employed received much money in checks and currency. It was his daily duty to take this money to the bank and deposit it. Lately, however, he had deposited the checks and retained the currency.

"You don't understand, Aunt Mary; you—you *can't*. It's the ponies—they got possession of me. I went to Benning every afternoon, and every afternoon I lost. I had to keep on going, to make good."

He stopped, and swallowed convulsively.

"The first of the month," he said, in a frightened whisper, "they'll find it out, and then they'll arrest me."

"How much did you take?" Miss Wetherby was surprised to find her voice so firm.

He named a sum whose magnitude deprived her of breath momentarily. She had expected a possible fifty dollars as an outside limit. Faint and dizzy, she retreated to her room, and the dawn of day found her sitting there by the window.

At the usual time Miss Wetherby, perhaps a shade paler than yes-

terday, went to the Treasury, and the morning was like other mornings in the Redemption Division. Many packages of money passed through her thin, blue-veined hands. Mechanically she counted them, but always as she recorded the amount she saw the sum needed by Robert before the first of the month. She felt bitter and resentful toward this money which was to be ground into pulp, while her boy—Alicia's son—must hereafter subsist upon apples of Sodom for lack of it.

"Let's go over to the park for a breath of air."

Miss Wetherby glanced at the clock, and was surprised to find it noon.

"No," she said; "not to-day, Mrs. Mills. I have a letter I must write."

"Well, then"—Mrs. Mills was busily pinning on her hat—"I won't put it away. You'll look after things."

She waved her hand comprehensively toward the money on her desk.

"Yes," replied Miss Wetherby; "yes, of course, Mrs. Mills. I'll look after things."

From force of habit, she opened a drawer in her desk and took out her lunch, but she did not untie it. Instead, she sat gazing into the open drawer, as if fascinated. The half-note so carefully put away the night before lay there quite safe and comfortable, and in the corner were three figures—a five and two ciphers. She took it out and laid it on her blotter. It was a very veteran of a note, scarred and battered to the point of dissolution, but the figures were distinct enough. Five hundred dollars! And Robert needed— Her eyes wandered toward the package she had just counted and recorded, also five hundred dollars in denomination, but the other end of the note. With a slight movement of the hand, she removed the top one and laid it also on her blotter. The result was a perfect note, barring the wear and tear of time.

Miss Wetherby gasped and looked around. She was virtually alone in the large room, and quite unnoticed. With a quick movement of her hands, she separated the flimsy half-note just removed from her package, leaving figures in the corner of each part. One piece she returned to the package, the other lay beside its companion on her blotter, and the note it made was almost perfect.

"Now God forgive me," she whispered, as she reached for the mucilage-bottle.

Five minutes later a respectable old note, held together by a strip of tissue-paper, and minus one corner, lay in Miss Wetherby's black bag. It was so easy—so very easy. Yesterday she had counted the money and recorded the amount before the note found in her drawer had slipped away from the elastic band that held them. The amount marked on the package must have agreed with the other half, or she would have known it by this time. Hers was the last count before

destruction, and the money would not be handled again. That much was sure, and for to-day she would take chances. She took desperate chances. Looking hastily at the packages of money before her, she snipped a strip sometimes from one and sometimes from another. Then she paused and looked at her neighbor's desk. Mrs. Mills, it appeared, was counting the other end of five-hundred-dollar bills.

"Why not?" said Miss Wetherby, and snipped again.

She grew more skilful and more thoughtful. Any note that can show its denomination, she knew, can be redeemed, no matter how dilapidated, therefore it was not necessary to withdraw any figures from Mrs. Mills's packages—merely fragments of the middle. From her own packages she took the edges and the figures, and always she left enough of the note to be destroyed to show what it had been. There was also enough of the note to be redeemed to show the amount intended.

With compressed lips and feverish hands, she again made use of tissue-paper and mucilage, and within the half-hour allowed for lunch she managed, quite unnoticed, to piece together four notes. When Mrs. Mills returned from the park, she found her friend leaning back in her chair, white and exhausted, with glittering eyes and trembling hands; but she resumed her work when the others did, and counted industriously all the afternoon. The notes went to the grinding machine, and Miss Wetherby went home richer by two thousand dollars. She had no fear about the mutilated money. Any bank would exchange it for new, and send it in for redemption.

She went home with a curious feeling of elation. Robert was safe—there was enough, and more than enough. Why she had taken the extra amount, she did not know. Had the half-hour been longer, she would probably have continued piecing notes together and secreting them in her black bag, so possessed was she by the desire for money, and the conviction that she must accumulate all she could while the opportunity lasted.

When she reached home, Alicia and Robert were out. On the table lay the day's mail, with on top a long white envelope bearing the War Department stamp. It was Robert's appointment to West Point. Miss Wetherby read it many times, and as she read she formulated the one great resolution of her life.

"Robert," she said that night, "here is your appointment. And I have arranged to get that money for you, but I will not give you one cent unless you agree to go to West Point. Otherwise the law may take its course."

Lying broad awake that night, Miss Wetherby listened to the passing hours, and to the quiet breathing of the girl at her side. Out of the surrounding darkness little devils appeared and attacked her with poisoned darts.

"You are a thief, a thief," they said.

"I have wronged no one," she protested. "The money would have been destroyed; and the Government is rich."

"You are a thief, a thief."

The clock ticked it, the passing street-cars ground it out, wheels rolling over the asphalt repeated it, and the rain that beat against the window took up the refrain:

"A thief, a thief."

"Our Father in Heaven," prayed Miss Wetherby, "have mercy upon me. I had to have the money—you know I did."

It is not necessary to dwell upon the days that followed. Robert took and passed his examination, and was duly entered at the Military Academy. Money was promptly produced for his entrance fee and other incidental expenses.

"I've given you your chance," said his aunt. "I was determined you should have a chance. Now, make the most of it, for I can do no more."

Money was also forthcoming when Alicia mentioned an invitation to spend the summer with a friend in the Berkshires.

"I can't go without clothes," said the girl, "and I know you can't give them to me, Aunt Mary. I'm past seventeen now, and I'd rather stay at home than not have suitable things."

"You shall have them," said Miss Wetherby.

So Alicia went away, and the summer—the red-hot Washington summer—slowly passed.

All day Miss Wetherby counted money, looking at it with sick abhorrence, and loathing the physical contact as it passed through her hands. She no longer wanted it, but nevertheless at night, when in her little, stifling room she slept the sleep of utter exhaustion, she usually dreamt she was piecing together mutilated notes. Often she wakened frightened and trembling—discovered and in the clutches of the law.

When the autumn came, Alicia did not return to the little flat. Instead, she wrote her aunt of her marriage to the brother of the girl with whom she had spent the summer.

I knew you'd say I was too young, Aunt Mary, and how could you give me a wedding anyhow? So we just did it quietly in New York, and Ruth went with me, so it's all right. We're going at once abroad, but I'm coming first to say good-by to you, for I want you to see Harry. I know you will like him. . . .

Another letter came also, frank and manly in tone, and containing eminently satisfactory statements as to references and settlements. Apparently, Alicia had done well for herself. Miss Wetherby folded the letters with shaking hands.

"If I had n't done it," she said, "Robert would have been in prison, and Alicia could not have gone to the Berkshires."

Two large tears glistened on her pale cheeks, and more followed when she tried to wipe them away.

"Thank God!" she sobbed. "Thank God! *Now* I can begin to save."

For the best part of four years Miss Wetherby saved, and her bank-account swelled visibly, but she no longer had her little flat. One room was quite enough, she said, now that she was alone. She had a small oil-stove in it, and did light housekeeping—so light, sometimes, it could hardly be called housekeeping at all. The Treasury still paid her seventy-five dollars a month, and each month she put away fifty dollars, and lived upon the remaining twenty-five—food, lodging, and raiment, and the little gifts she always sent her children at Christmas. And every year the price of living steadily increased. She had to buy medicine, too, at times, for there were heavy colds in winter and equally heavy inertia in summer.

She grew daily more languid, and her friends in the Redemption Division recommended raw eggs, beef juice, and port wine. Miss Wetherby smiled acquiescence, and purchased breakfast foods, the cheaper vegetables, and an occasional soup-bone. Whenever she could add a dollar or two to the monthly fifty, she did it, and rejoiced greatly.

She was often cold in winter and stifled in summer, but the seasons passed somehow, and now there was enough. There was even a little over, for the bank paid interest, and a little still remained of her first deposit.

And so one day she did not go to the Treasury at nine o'clock, as usual. Instead, she went to the bank and withdrew her deposit, down to the very last dollar. There were four five-hundred-dollar bills and some additional smaller notes.

Seated at a writing-table in the ladies' room, she carefully counted it, then took from her bag a long white envelope, linen lined and ready stamped. It was addressed

THE CONSCIENCE FUND,
TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
WASHINGTON, D. C.,

and contained a few lines in delicate, old-fashioned writing:

The enclosed is in payment of money taken by me from the Government during a period of great need. It has been returned at the first possible moment. I deeply regret my sin, and have made what reparation I could.

Miss Wetherby took up a pen, hesitated, and laid it down again.

"I cannot sign my name," she said. "I cannot do it."

She folded the sheet of paper about the four five-hundred-dollar bills and placed them in the envelope, sealing it carefully. Her business being now transacted, she left the bank and sought the letter-box on the corner. It received the envelope with the indifference of letter-boxes in general, and Miss Wetherby straightened her shoulders and held her head a little more erect as she turned away.

Suddenly she felt very tired. The June sun beat mercilessly upon her head, and heat-waves reflected from the asphalt scorched her face. In Lafayette Park, near by, the shade looked cool and inviting. She thought she would go over and sit on the bench beneath the giant elm for a while.

Washington was in the throes of the period of intense heat often experienced in June, and luckless humanity gasped for breath, existing because they must, and not from personal desire to do so.

It was not so cool under the elm as it had looked from the sidewalk. Miss Wetherby sank down upon the green bench and put her hand to her head. She was glad to rest. She hoped soon to lose that uncomfortable ringing in her ears that had set itself to the old refrain, "You are a thief, a thief."

"I was," she said, half aloud. "I was yesterday, but not to-day."

She held tightly to her black bag, for it contained the smaller notes not enclosed in the envelope, and with them she meant to be extravagant. She was going to West Point, to see Robert graduate. Everything was all planned and arranged. When she had rested a little, she was going down-town to buy two ready-made silk dresses—two at one time! She would take the car and ride down, and also she would lunch at a restaurant. She thought she would have cold chicken and salad, and perhaps ice-cream for dessert. The days of rigid economy were over, and hereafter she could spend her salary on herself. It had been more than twenty years since she had been at liberty to do this, and she felt herself a monster of selfishness when she thought of it. But she meant to live comfortably after her return from West Point.

"I will take the next car for down-town," she thought.

Many cars went by, and still Miss Wetherby sat on the green bench under the elm. Noon approached, but still she sat there, her black bag clutched in her hands, and her lips parted in a tremulous smile. A policeman passed, paused, looked searchingly at her, and walked slowly on. Miss Wetherby resented it vaguely. What right had he to look at her to-day? She had returned the money. The very next car should take her down-town, and she would buy a lavender foulard trimmed in white.

The sun climbed higher, and the heat increased. Across the broad

avenue the White House glistened, spotless and dazzling, with the many-columned Treasury on its right. In its basement women were counting condemned money, regardless of the heat. Miss Wetherby reflected that she too would be counting there to-morrow, as usual.

She looked again across the avenue, but now she could not see the Treasury clearly, because the air was full of purple waves. It was strange she had never before noticed how crooked some of the columns were. Again the policeman passed, and paused uncertainly.

Miss Wetherby looked him full in the face, and rose to go downtown—swayed, caught at the green bench, and collapsed, a crumpled heap, upon the asphalt.

"I knew it," said the policeman, hurrying up. "Another case of heat prostration. Call the ambulance."

In the Emergency Hospital they did their best, but the young doctor shook his head.

"Utter exhaustion and lack of nourishment," he said. "No chance in this heat. No chance at all."

Miss Wetherby opened her eyes and looked at him.

"The Thief upon the Cross was saved," she said; "have I no chance?"

The clerk in charge of the Conscience Fund whistled when he opened a long white envelope, next morning, and two thousand dollars fell out upon his desk. He started the money upon its proper course in red-tape officialdom, then expressed an opinion to a companion.

"It beats me," he said, "this Conscience Fund business. But I suppose they only send it back when they have so much money they don't know what else to do with it."

And in the Redemption Division a well-worn swivel-chair was pushed to one side, empty and neglected.



IMPRESSIONS

THE man who has not something of the Boy in him needs watching.

VERY serious cases of blindness have been permanently cured by clergymen.

THE Cross is a mighty privilege; and only the sublimely great are able to pay the price at which Hemlock is held.

A MAN who will cut out his friends to gratify his wife will eventually leave his wife to gratify his friends.

Minna Thomas Antrim

THE INSTINCT ETERNAL

By Stanley Olmsted

THERE were bunches of crumpled pink roses about the room, and a pervading scent of citron hardly to be accounted for. The rugs were sparse on the carpet of sage green, with a nap so heavy that one had the feeling of treading on some especially exotic species of hot-house moss. The open fire blazed. Everywhere within the wide spaces of this Fifty-sixth Street apartment was a sort of fresh closeness.

"Well, I'm with you!" cried Armath heartily.

Obedient to the direction of the maid at the outer door, he had followed the long hallway its full length, and now stood at the designated threshold, facing Mrs. Biederman.

"Tossed up again!" she said, and arose, still holding her book, with languid brightness. "How do you do, Rufe?"

"Never for keeps," he jested, for her first allusion. Then he deluged her with his big hand-shake which was like the rest of him.

Mrs. Biederman did not sit down again, but stood as if warming herself before the fire. She was wreathed in a mild gaiety, responsive to the vigorous cheer of the man. But she trembled slightly, and the hand he had clasped was icy cold.

"You bridge-builders," she said, "bring some of the draught from your canyons, some of the spray from your cascades. Let me see, Rufe—how long has it been this time?"

"If I were to tell you, it would n't be diplomatic," he parried. "Yet I keep the tally, down to the day."

"Seven years,—I know. I don't count them; but they confront me."

"They pass in just about the time of Christmas to Christmas when we were children," he reflected. "Christmas to Christmas!"

"Oh," she shuddered—"that used to be much, much longer."

For the first time he noted that her hair was snow-white. But the change was far less than she imagined. After all, his most vivid recollection of her was from their school days; and then she had worn long, thick braids of an indescribably pale flax, almost colorless. Once, in a fit of jealous irritation, he had boyishly tried to disillusionize himself, describing her as "towhead."

"Only this morning," he ventured, "they told me of your——" He had halted. The word "bereavement" seemed inappropriate. He had none of that subtlety which can satirize a recognized fact with the effect of good form. She came quietly to his assistance.

"Mr. Biederman died three months ago, yes,—after an illness of three years."

The mere citation seemed to give her back the courage she had lacked in the beginning. She smoothed a fold in her morning gown. And now it occurred to him that she was a pastel of delicate color, gray-blue and white, with one or two of the crumpled pink roses pricked in at her belt. The deep isolation in which he had understood she lived was, then, the only formal acknowledgment made to her widowhood.

"It's an odd thing," he mused,—“but sometimes I've had a theory that when a man loves, truly and sincerely, in his boyhood, he establishes a sort of wireless to last him through his life. Nobody seemed to feel that I need be kept informed about you; yet I believe, for instance, I could put my finger on the very moment when all this——” He paused, eyed her keenly, and made a sweeping gesture with his huge right hand. “When all this—proved a fizzle.”

It was a decisive comment, from him. Twice during the first seven years of her residence in New York they had talked thus together for an hour; talked fully and freely, as befitted old friends who understood each other. Yet never during the life of her husband had Armath by so much as the turn of an eyelash given signal of suspicion. He had more than left her pride intact, even as her world had left it intact; blithely ignoring what all of them must surely know she endured. And now behold him, flinging an almost brutal allusion to the hollowness of the luxury she had so deliberately chosen.

She marvelled at her own lack of resentment. At this of all moments such a comment should be execrably tactless. Yet somehow the flavor of it was indefinably exhilarating: as if, for the first time since their boyhood and girlhood, friendship arose once more to the level eliminating mere questions of good taste. She feared to return his look which searched her with frank kindness. She feared the light she felt in her eyes—something akin to actual gratitude.

"You escaped a lot, though," he went on. "To me, personally, my life has been as satisfactory as a man has a right to expect—yet I have never been exactly what you would call successful. I never will be. I shall just go on building bridges and things in out-of-the-way corners."

"Often I've wondered," she said, "where you were and what you were doing. Yet always that certainty, was there to refresh me;

always I could be sure you were out under the open sky and the stars!" She drew a deep breath. "It was exhilarating. It did me good."

Then she did not know, perhaps. Her words touched him with a vague anxiety which he tried to dismiss as reasonless.

"Did no one ever tell you," he began,—“of my marriage?"

"Your marriage——" She seemed to grope for the meaning. A blindness lay across her forehead.

"Why, no, Rufe." Her words were voiceless, the merest whisper.

He had meant to relate the story, but now his face was averted. She realized that she made it hard for him. . . .

After all, why should he not have married? There surged keenly within her a tender selflessness, obliterating the nameless wound of vanity which suddenly she could smile at: excusing herself that, after all, she was very, very human and—a woman.

When she spoke again her voice had ring and timbre. "I suppose no woman ever lived," she exclaimed in an abandon of frankness, "no woman—who did n't wince at surrendering everything or anything she has voluntarily give up. It's the old paradox of the dog in the manger—I suppose I'm no better than the rest of them, and yet—I'm going to be—I *am already!* For it comes over me, all in an instant, that you could bring me no better news of *you*. Knowing you as I do, I am utterly reassured. You would never marry save as marriage fulfilled your truest, highest impulse. If *you* are married, then the woman of your choice does honor to whomsoever you would once have chosen. I'm so glad for you, Rufe—so glad!"

Her eyelash was dewy as she spoke. A serene joy of self-wrought exaltation obsessed her. She was oblivious to the brooding into which he had sunk. Ordinarily more sensitive than the crumpled rose-petals which now she picked asunder and scattered, she was, for the moment, blunt to his sinister hesitation.

"It's a good deal of a long story," he was saying. "You have just admitted you were a woman. Well, I can't add a whole lot in my own defense from a woman's point of view. About the most I can say is in exact unison with you—that I am a man, and no better than the rest of them. In my own eyes, I am justified. But I doubt if I am to be in yours."

And now the woman trembled. He was threatening the single talisman which had withstood the years.

"For God's sake, what would you tell me?"

"It was just the act of a man," he went on, "keeping faith with those instincts which are as truly a part of him as renunciations where faith has no opportunity. I married in British Columbia, six years ago,—a half-breed girl."

She broke loose in a wildness like delirium. "Ah," she cried,

"then I was right,—my girlhood's decision was right. There is no crime upon my soul. Now you may hear what I had thought never to let cross my lips. My marriage was a crucifixion, yes—but not for my family, not because I was weak, as you supposed. It was because I was strong; because I had then the clear vision I was afterward to lose. The dominant trait in your nature was something which frightened me—something I could neither assist nor inspire, and I somehow knew it then, even if I was to forget it later. You were a giant meant to live among the hills. I was a bit of milk and honey to lure you sometimes indoors; to sour on your palate; to fetter all things in you that would most rebel. Long afterward, when I had seen you, spoken with you, and felt the danger, if not the sin, of a murdered yearning, and known the toll exacted of riches, and the curse of a disparity in years forbidding the pretense of congeniality between husband and wife,—then I thought I had been wrong. But I had not been wrong."

She paused for some reply; but he said nothing. She could see how he weighed each word she uttered.

"And my marriage, too, justified itself at last. It justified itself!" she exulted. "During those three years of his sickness my husband was as a little child. The physicians pitied me. They had an ugly name for his malady. But mother love was granted me, and I rejoiced. I was needful to him. No one else could have been. It had all happened for that."

"Catherine!" It was the first time he had called her by name. "Catherine! Motherhood was ever the strongest trait in you. At times it has come to me as it comes to me now: it was the motherhood in you that let me go—just because I didn't need you enough. And you were right. Maybe when I've told you the rest you'll see my extenuation. I too loved children—you'll grant me that. And now I have two little girls—two little orphaned girls. At the birth of the younger my little wild wife died!"

She held forth her hands. She called back to him as one calls to sudden light smiting darkness.

"Oh!" she cried. "Bring them to me! Bring them to me!"

KNAVES

BY HAROLD SUSMAN

O F knaves the very worst are those,
I do maintain,
Who can their former honesty
Precisely feign.

ODORS AND MEMORIES

By Elizabeth Maury Coombs

NOW is it May-time, and the smell of clove-pinks brings back to life a box-hedged garden, where the world-wind dies; and views of backward-bearing paths rise vivid and alluring. My half-forgotten little self with tangled curls scampers past a gray and slowly-walking Me, through these old landscapes brought to life by the spicy odors of the pinks.

Many-tracked, like a rabbit warren, my beaten path of life runs back into the green forest, yet to-day, if I bruise a walnut leaf, I can see for one delicious laughter-living minute even the freckles on the turned-up nose of a little lad that once I loved.

Sometimes it almost seems to me that the incense-breathing bloom of mimosa can bring back that time before I was I. It has for me a smell of pre-existence. I see again some desert, lying like a sea of sand, shadowed only in shapes of shifting clouds, the plodding, nodding camel train, and that pre-existent me, in blue atmospheric-tinted shirt—for I was ever a low-caste fellow, yet a merry soul withal—pausing to rest me at an oasis, mayhap stealing spiced grapes and sugared dates from the camel's pack, then sleeping beside the whispering water in the shade of the listening tree the sleep of the pious uncaught, while slow around me fall tired mist-pink mimosa blooms, and their fragrance fills with fadeless films the dark room of my brain.

A friend tells me that the smell of tame white rabbits strikes clear upon the retina of her brain the picture of an English garden so powerfully that even each overgrown spear of grass, towering his little inch of straw above his green silk fellows, stands for one vivid moment revealed!

It is not always pleasant odors that cause these pictures to appear. One tells me that the smell of Peruvian guano brings out for her the way-station where she used to wait the coming of the carriage to bear her off for one home-sick week to the uncongenial society of the proper relatives of a half-memorized, half-idolized, and not wholly proper father. She can feel again the nail-heads of the little old brown leather trunk, as they pushed themselves obtrusively into the society of her somewhat skimpy little anatomy, while she curled up on its leather back to watch the long dust-ribbon of road that would cloud after a long time in front of the old family carriage. This pervasive

smell can bring back to her even the dirt-filled floor cracks, and the fringe of tired horses tied with down-drooping heads to await at the rack the coming of the mail.

What slender threads are these that fasten us from life to life! Frail are they, and yet strong enough to bear a thought from childhood unto age! Sometimes, it almost seems, from souls long dead to living selves of them. They are like the thin film of mist the spider spins from nodding grass to nodding grass, that, bending with each wanton wind, holds yet her weight of jewelled dew-drops through the night-time till the day.



THE "UNFINISHED" SYMPHONY

TO CARL POHLIG,

The inspired Leader of the Philadelphia Orchestra, on listening to the great Schubert.

BY FLORENCE EARLE COATES

O MUSIC of divine imagining!
Does he not hear you in his dreams to-night?
Can you no wonder to his spirit bring—
And no delight?

His love created you; his hopes, his fears,
Are poignant in these tones, surmounting death—
These melodies that dim the eyes with tears,
And snatch the breath! . . .

And can he longer sleep, nor note this strain
Whose magic enters now, with lovelier art
That like a benediction thrills the brain
And fills the heart?

Ah, not to one shall all earth's joys belong!
So have the gods ordained, whom we obey,
Lest mortal men should deem themselves as strong,
As blest as they.

On Schubert, out of love, the ecstasy
That wrote this godlike music they conferred:
To us they gave to *hear* the symphony
He never heard!

THE DIGNITY OF ELLEN

By Clinton Dangerfield

"**I** F you're askin' my opinion of Lorella Dean since she's come home from that course in that musical college," returned Miss Imogene, ripping open, with flying fingers and assured touch, the broadcloth skirt we were "making over," "she ain't to say exactly stuck-up; but she's a little of what you might call ficety. Yet I've seen worse cases. Some folks is like risen cream that's wantin' to forget it came from the cow. I knew a prouder girl than Lorella Dean once, an' that was Ellen Grannis. Her grandfather was a laboring man; but Ellen forgot this, an' she certainly was the limit for pride once—when she was Ellen Grannis. Her father had made so much money on his cross-roads store that Mr. Grannis he built the finest house in the town."

"You mean the green and white building with the Grecian pillars in front?" I asked, trying to rip a seam as speedily as Miss Imogene, and, consequently, cutting the cloth in two places. She perceived this instantly.

"Good land!" she exclaimed. "Practice comes before speed, Miss Lucy. I would n't try to run my fingers over the pianner keys fast as you do—so why are you always tryin' to keep up with me in dress-makin' or alterin'? Don't you know you can't do it?"

"I see I can't," I said meekly.

"And you see you've damaged that breadth seriously," continued the unappeased Miss Imogene. "I'll have to narrow both of them gores now, so's to cut off that injured piece."

"You were talking of Ellen Grannis," I diverted.

"I guess I was. Well, they moved in the new house, and the only fly in Ellen's ointment was that they did n't own the building on the right-hand lot, which had, as she expressed it, 'awful common people for occupants.' And it's true her neighbors were n't elegant folks—the old man and the old woman was straight from Ireland; they talked with the queerest kind er brogue; not with the correct language you and me, or Ellen, would er used. And they sat barefooted on their front porch—so you can understand that, though they was clean old folks, thrifty, and money-makers too, yet they certainly was, as Ellen said, awful common."

"Still, God makes the common people just as well as the store-keepers, and Ellen she had no call to walk by them Irishers as though

they was dirt under her feet. She never give 'em a greetin'; and if they said, 'The top of the mornin'' to her, she always asked 'em what they meant, in a freezin' way, as though she could n't understand that queer way of talkin', and pretty soon, by the time the Irishers' son got home from college (he was makin' a lawyer of himself), the O'Harrigans and the Grannises never spoke to each other.

"Edward O'Harrigan was a handsome feller of twenty-five, lithe as hick'ry and straight as a poplar; with a voice that sort er had the north wind and the music of fallin' waters mixed up in it, in the oddest way. He had the laughing Irish eye—I must say I don't like sombre eyes, Miss Lucy. Some folks' eyes absorb the shadders and nothin' else; but Edward's—"

"Well, the girls, all except Ellen, set their caps for him at a furious gait; but *she* never turned a lash his way. She pretended she was scarcely aware of his existence, and he answered her in kind; that is to say, he passed her like she were n't there. The whole thing worried them good old Irish parents considerable; they spoke to me about it. However, Ellen might er known such pride as hers was dangerous. I kind er suspicion the Almighty keeps an angel to do nothin' but invent ways of upsettin' human dignity; and Ellen's upsettin' come through a furrin pet of hers that she was awful proud of. It was give her by her uncle, who's a sailor, and it was one of them little green change-color lizards—a camelyun.

"Nasty little thing—it was a lizard, no matter what you called it; yet Ellen wore it on a chain, and it lived on her shoulder—most of the time.

"One Sunday there was one of them up-river excursions our town loves so much; and as the weather was perfect, looked like the whole male population, and most all the female, went. I had to stay home, 'cause of a bilious attack I was just gettin' over; but when I went out for a walk that afternoon, to git some fresh-air cure for my wobbly feelin's, I never saw such a lonesome-lookin' town. I knowed Ellen Grannis had n't gone, though her parents had. She said she 'never cared for pleasure where the mob participated.' So I went up to the Grannis' house to have a chat with Ellen. Somehow, she was always civil to me—for one thing, my Grandfather Smith was a Senator, and then I dress well, although most dressmakers are dowds themselves. Funny, ain't it?"

"*You* certainly are n't," I returned. "*You're* always perfectly gowned, Miss Imogene."

She gave a satisfied nod.

"I know I am. It's a good advertisement, too. Well, I remember I had on an awful stylish foulard, and carried my parasol. I rang at the Grannis' house, but nobody come; there was the stillness of death.

Thinks I to myself, can Ellen be in the back yard? I went round to the side entrance and called.

"'Oh, Ellen!' I says. 'Oh, Ellen!'

"And a voice answers from her window, quite chilly, 'I'm up here.'

"I looked up, and I fairly jumped; for there sat that dignified Ellen Grannis on the window-sill, with her legs hanging down outside—just like an actress in them moving pictures.

"'Why, Ellen Grannis!' I says. 'What a queer place to set! Whatever made you choose it?'

"'Whatever made you such a fool,' hollers Ellen, 'as to think I chose it?'

"From her voice, I could see her nerves was considerably on edge.

"'Then why, in Heaven's name, are you there?' says I, tiltin' my neck back till I nearly broke it.

"'Heaven had nothin' to do with it,' snaps Ellen. 'It was my camelyun.'

"'Did he drive you out there?' I says. 'Has he gone mad?'

"'Have you?' says Ellen. 'Lizards don't have hydrophoby. He broke his chain and got out the window, and crawled up outside of the panes. To reach him, I had to sit on the sill with my feet hanging externally. I got him, and just as I was sitting still a moment, refastenin' him to his chain, the window slid down, and I could n't raise it any more. The inside block and cords have come loose again.'

"'I'll run right round,' says I, 'and come upstairs and h'ist that window. Two of us together can h'ist it, I know.'

"'You can't get in,' says Ellen calmly, but with a kind er desperate tone in her voice. 'I locked up down below, intendin' to go to sleep up here. It will have to be lifted from the outside. Can't you get the ladder from the back, Miss Imogene, and come up here?'

"'Never!' says I. 'Never! I'd fall off the top rung. I'm giddy-headed on ladders, and that window is so many feet up that the ladder would n't hardly reach it. What you need is a man. Ain't there no men left in this pesky village?'

"'None that I am acquainted with,' says Ellen, so awful stiff that something in her tone made me twist right round and look up at the O'Harrigans' house, just behind me. And there, his elbows on the sill of his open window, exzactly opposite the window of Ellen, sat Edward O'Harrigan, apparently readin' most diligently.

"His handsome face was solemn as a barn owl. He looked like he'd never cracked a smile in his life. I stared at him a full ten seconds, and then at Ellen.

"'Well, this is the beatin'est!' says I.

"'I don't know what you mean,' says Ellen coldly.

"At her tone, I saw I had what the newspapers call 'a delicate situation' on hand, and I rose pretty well to the occasion.

"*'Miss Grannis,'* I says, 'let me make you acquainted with my personal friend, Mr. Edward O'Harrigan. Mr. O'Harrigan, Miss Grannis.'

"They bowed at each other, and both muttered something about 'pleased to meet you.'

"*'Mr. O'Harrigan,'* says I, 'will you *kindly* get a ladder, and lift this window for Miss Grannis—as a personal favor to *me*?'

"*'Certainly—it will be a pleasure!'* says Mr. Edward O'Harrigan. 'But may I suggest that a plank would be better than a ladder? I happen to have one here of just the right length.' With this he produced a plank that was suspiciously handy for the purpose. I believe he'd brought it there half an hour before. He laid it from his window-sill to her window, and he coolly walked over.

"*'Oh, be careful!'* I could n't help hollerin'; for the plank was n't over three inches wide, though very thick. 'You'll be killed, Edward O'Harrigan, and your parents will blame me!'

"*'Don't, Miss Imogene!'* hollers Ellen, turnin' real white. 'You'll make him nervous, and he *will* fall!'

"*'I am never nervous,'* says Edward; and with that he bent to her window and h'isted it, and put under it a cane he brought over.

"The next thing I knew, he had slid past Ellen into her room, and I was just wonderin' why, when she give a shriek of alarm.

"*'That window has paralyzed my er—my limbs!'* she says, and I felt a thrill of real horror.

"But Edward O'Harrigan only leaned over her and put one arm round her waist. 'I thought you'd have that sort of trouble. You've been there an hour,' he says calmly, 'and very naturally your legs are sound asleep. I must lift you in here, Miss Grannis.' With this, he quietly put another arm under her knees, lifted her like a baby, and they disappeared from view. I ran round to the front door, and in about four minutes down come Edward and let me in.

"*'You go in the library,'* says I as he was about to leave. 'You wait there—yes, you do what I tell you. I may need help—you must n't go yet. She—her nerves may suffer from this shock.'

"I run upstairs, and found Ellen lying on her bed where he'd laid her, wrigglin' with the pain of reflowin' circulation, and cryin' with mortification.

"*'I'm so humiliated!'* she sobs. 'So fearfully humiliated. I who have been so dignified!'

"*'Ellen Grannis,'* says I, 'sit up and listen to me. There's only one way to treat this situation. Did you cry while he was here?'

"*'Of course not!'* fires Ellen.

" 'Then you 've one way to "save your face" yet,' says I. 'Get up, work your legs into locomotion, and ask this young man to a cup of tea with you and me; an' treat the whole thing as a joke. My word for it, *he'll* never spread it; nor will I.' (And even now, Miss Lucy, I 'm tellin' you this in confidence.)

"Ellen listened, and she took my advice. We had a cup of tea, and, to save her dignity and never let him know how densely mortified she was, Ellen threw her dignity to the winds. We had a real good time. And six months later——"

"What happened, Miss Imogene? Were they friends?"

"Yes, an' he did n't need no plank to her window," laughed Miss Imogene. "He married Ellen Grannis."

LULLABY

BY ROLAND RATHBONE

A DREAM-SHIP sails o'er waters deep
From Very-Tired Land.
It cleaves the tranquil waves of Sleep,
So take thy mother's hand
And journey with her near and far.
The gentle light of Evening Star
Shall show the reefs and safely guide
Our vessel to the other side!

The gentle hands of angels blest
Shall set thy barklet's sail,
And thou shalt roam the Sea of Rest
Where dance the moonbeams pale;
And sweetest dreams thy crew shall be,
And elfin voices sing for thee
Some barcarolle of fairy-lore
Till thou shalt reach the other shore!

The other shore, O Baby-Bye,
Is one of golden sand,
With fresh'ning winds and opal sky—
They call it Sunrise Land.
Out there we'll find another day,
And Mother dear will send away
The vessel and its drowsy crew,
To come again next night for you!

THE TALKING MACHINE AS A PUBLIC EDUCATOR

By W. Dayton Wegfarth

THE mechanical talking machine has become a more important factor in the musical education of the masses than is generally realized. More than five thousand agencies handle these instruments in this country, and it is through their courtesy in the demonstration of machines and records that the great army of employed men and women who, for sundry reasons, are unable to attend operatic performances and orchestral concerts, are afforded an opportunity to advance their knowledge in the field of melody and to satisfy a craving, inherent in many of them, for more worthwhile music than is commonly ground out of green-covered street pianos.

It is quite interesting, and certainly most convincing, to visit a central demonstration room at the noon luncheon hour and listen to the comments of the music-hungry young men and women from the city's department stores and factories. Nine out of ten are pretty sure to ask to hear famous solos from operas sung by the Metropolitan's high-priced stars. The titles of the desired pieces are likely to be fearfully mutilated in the asking, but the demonstrator is versed in department-store Italian and usually guesses aright. Doubtless the leading song hits are beaten "to a frazzle" on the parlor pianos in more or less humble homes during the romantic hour following supper; but at noon-time Verdi, Rossini, Donizetti, Gounod, Mozart, Mascagni, Puccini, and even Wagner, are the chosen entertainers of these melody-hunting salespeople.

"Say, mister," a blonde person asks, "spiel off somethin' by Mel-bu, will y', please?"

"Certainly; anything in particular?"

"Sure," she answers, turning to her companion. "Th'—th'—th' daffy scene from 'Lucha.' Ain't that it, Alice?"

Alice does n't know, but the accommodating demonstrator does, and he plays the "Mad Scene from Lucia."

"Gee!" Alice says, when the record has been played, "that's goin' some, with a big S on th' front end, ain't it?"

"Goin' some!" her friend replies, with a sigh. "If I could gargle me throat like that, Murphy's Store an' me seven jokes per could go

t'—t'—t' th' jungles with Rosyfelt, an' I would n't even murmur a fare-thee-well."

On one occasion the 'phone bell of a phonograph agency rang commandingly.

"Is this th' fonygraft company?" a feminine voice asked.

"Yes," the demonstrator replied. "What can we do for you?"

"Well, say, it's like this," the voice continued; "Mary Sinker got married last week—she useter be night operator on this line, y' know, till a swell from up-town fell in love with her voice—an' she just come home this mornin'. Th' girls here are goin' t' switch on her wire, an' we'd like t' have y' tack on one o' them high-toned weddin' marches so that she kin hear it when she answers her call. Jest put th' fonygraft right up against th' transmitter, will y'?"

"Sure," the demonstrator agreed, entering into the spirit of the thing. "Call up Mary and I'll start the band." So Mary was called up, and, with thirty or forty operators at 'change, listened first to the Lohengrin and Mendelssohn Wedding Marches, and then, going from the sublime to the ridiculous, to "I Would If I Could, but I Can't, Because I'm Married Now," and finally to "So Long, Mary."

Another time a grimy urchin wandered into the show-room.

"Say, kin Scotty sing, mister?" he asked.

"If you refer to the great Italian baritone, he certainly can, young man," the demonstrator replied.

"Well," the youngster continued in some perplexity, "is he de guy what runs De't Valley?"

"No, this is a different man, but you shall hear him, any way," the demonstrator laughed, and he placed the glorious Toreador song from Carmen on a large machine.

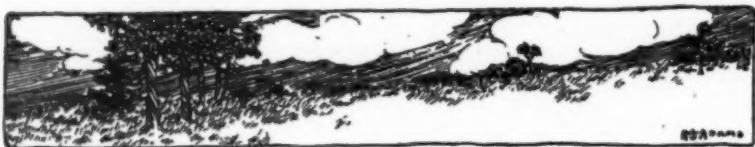
The boy stood enraptured, listening to the great singer's masterpiece. After it was finished he gazed earnestly into the big horn for some seconds, and then, heaving a sigh, turned to the amused demonstrator.

"An' I'll betcher," he said slowly, as though to carry conviction to himself, "that—they—ain't—even—related!"

In Germany, Italy, and, in fact, most foreign countries, the people's knowledge of good music is almost universal; the airs which the working classes hum and the street arabs whistle are those the grand opera stars sing and the public bands play. In other words, their "popular" tunes are excerpts from standard works, for there opera and concerts are not luxuries, but easily within the reach of the masses; and music, instead of being an "extra" study, is a part of the general school course, and must be mastered, fundamentally, at least, as thoroughly as mathematics. And in our own land popular taste is vastly improved. The daily sales sheet of every talking machine agency will show that the

records in greatest demand are those of operatic melodies, symphonic works, and "standard" compositions rather than records of "popular" music.

Thus the talking machine is, in a way, filling the void which exists because of a scarcity of institutions for the advancement of all that is best in music, maintained for the benefit of the multitude of workers who are unable to avail themselves of the city's high-priced musical performances. For the American public's appreciation of good music is fully as keen as the European's, the only difference being that here the opportunities are not as manifold. Therefore, the phonograph should be looked upon as a public educator, and not merely as a mechanical toy. It is an invention which has a specific duty to perform and limitless possibilities; and there is no doubt that it will receive due recognition when its wide scope in the field of public good is universally appreciated.



MAY

BY ETHEL HALLETT

MAY speaks in the voices of busy brooks,
 In the singing of wind in the grasses,
 From her smiling skies, ever downward looks
 On all her daintily bowered nooks
 That the lazy bumble-bee passes.

May loves the little and helpless things,—
 She shelters each frail tiny fellow,
 And hovers protecting mother wings
 O'er every struggling life that sings
 In her breezes gentle and mellow.

We welcome you blithely with loving arms,
 And the earth her joy confesses;
 You creep up daintily with your charms,
 With lavish giving and upturned palms,
 And healing in your caresses.

THE SAFETY VALVE

By Emily Newell Blair

It was Sunday evening.

"Don't you want a cup of coffee, Jennie?" Jack called to me from the kitchen.

"No; for pity's sake, let's sit down and enjoy one moment of waking silence," I answered from the Morris chair where I had settled myself.

Jack accepted my remark in the right spirit, that quiet, understanding one that makes me love him more every day we live together. I was n't exactly cross, but the steam and confusion inside of me had to be let off some way, and the retort impatient seemed most satisfactory for the purpose. Still, I'd been married long enough to know that I must n't go too far. A man won't love a "nagger" any more than he will a dowd—at least, Jack would n't, and I suppose the ambition of my life is to keep Jack's love. So, when the aroma floated in to me, I added appreciatively, "It does smell awfully good."

I had been spending the whole day in the kitchen, cooking, cleaning, and dish-washing, while Jack played nurse to the children—a luxury they made the most of. I often tell Jack that he works at his job of parent oftener than any other man I know, though I couldn't get through if he did n't. It had been an awful busy day, any way. All the outdoors life and noise, seemingly put to sleep by the snowstorm, found volcanic eruption in the animal spirits and vocal organs of the children. I had just finished putting them to bed. Chubby had insisted on holding my hand while he waited for the Sandman, and, being too physically and mentally tired to endure his vociferous protests, I had complied. At last he slept, and I folded my hands in luxuriant idleness, sinking blissfully into momentary arms of rest, and resentful of any effort to jerk me from them.

Jack soon brought me in a cup of steaming coffee and some crackers. My! they did taste good, though Jack makes coffee in a very simple way, by throwing a handful of coffee into a potful of water and letting it boil until he wants it. Still, I'm not particular about the flavor of things after I have cooked and tasted three meals in a day, and I soon perked up enough to wish that I had changed my dress and rearranged my hair, when in walked Professor Harmon.

"Why weren't you at church to-day?" he asked. "We missed you."

Jack and I sing in the choir. With three children, I know it is ridiculous of me to do it, but Jack has a splendid tenor voice, and he will not sing unless I keep up my music and sing with him. I can't object, because he helps me so much. People say—they do, for I've heard them—"Oh, those poor Lathams! Three children in six years!" It does seem unfair for us to have our children and our music both together, when so many married people have n't anything in common except their names.

But to return to Professor Harmon. He is a great friend of Jack's, and of mine, too, of course. I went to school to him—he is only young with the perennial youth of bachelorhood—but, though he likes me, he enjoys me most in the capacity of hostess. We told him how the girl had left without notice on Saturday, gave him a cup of coffee, and drifted into a friendly chat over the new minister and the coming concert—at least, I meant to talk, for the Professor is very interesting, and, besides, I try to keep "fit" mentally for Jack's friends; but a barometric drop in the atmosphere made me realize with a start that I was dreaming of a steamer-chair in a rose-garden.

"What—what was it?" I stammered. "You—you said something to me?"

The Professor was unpleasantly silent, while Jack repeated a question which, I gathered, had been addressed to me. I made some sort of a reply, and the Professor asked me why matrimony so affected the conversational ability of women.

"You, for instance," he flattered me, "used to be a clever talker."

Fortunately for me, we were interrupted just then by Jack's other chum, George Edwards. I would n't have had Jack think I was bored for anything, but I knew that the home atmosphere and smoking their pipes entertained them far better than I, so I did n't bother myself much in spite of the Professor's taunt. Indeed, they seemed so easily satisfied that I found it in my heart to pity all the poor young ladies who were being fascinating to their Sunday night beaux in return for a little uneducated admiration and a box of candy.

But as the door closed after our callers, Jack threw his arm around me. "It's been a hard day, dear, and yet we've given those fellows the happiest part of theirs, do you know it?" And the joke is that he meant that "we," too.

Well, such a week as that Sunday began for me! Monday and Tuesday, the spare moments left from housework were spent in vain explorations of Niggertown to hunt down a washerwoman, in anxious waiting for answers to my advertisement for a girl, and in Fresh Air excursions for the children on the sled—with me for the horse.

"Oh, Jack," I wailed Tuesday night, almost ready to give up hope, "we've simply got to have some clean clothes, and I draw the line at washing."

"Oh, well, there's a to-morrow," he put me off cheerfully, and it came over me suddenly how nice that to-morrow might be. I suppose it was because I was so tired that I whispered to myself foolishly: "Good night, To-day. Thank God for a To-morrow!"

And something surely did happen, though neither a girl nor a washerwoman. At the end of a fearful day, Laura came to supper. Now, when I have a good girl, I love to have Laura drop in—she seems a connecting link between girlhood and my present state—but she does n't fit in with a working-woman's life. She's too much of a butterfly. Her whole interest centres in beaux and new clothes. Not that I scorn pretty clothes, mind. I fully appreciate Polly Parke's feelings when her first purchase in Kansas City, after spending two years on an Oklahoma ranch, was a pink parasol. Every one said: "How silly! You can't carry it. It will fade first thing." She retorted: "Of course I can't. I am going to hang it up to look at, and if any one says 'Impractical' to me I'll slay her." But Laura is all pink parasols—which, perhaps, is why the men all admire her, Jack among them. In fact, once I feared he admired her the most of all.

While I put the children to bed, Laura talked with Jack in the living-room. Their laughter percolated in to me in tiny dribs—they certainly enjoyed each other. Jack had to take her home, too, and as I waited for him I read the new magazine, or at least the article on "Marriage and Divorce." I was thinking over what it suggested when he returned.

"Cold as blitzen!" he announced. "I don't mind your having your friends, but could n't you choose a pleasanter night for me to take them home?"

"Why, Jack"—I looked at him suspiciously—"this article says that the trouble with marriage is that the man is n't free to enjoy the companionship of other women—interesting women—besides his wife, and he craves it."

"Depends on the wife, I guess," was his disconcerting answer.

I swallowed the retort, but it tickled the end of my tongue, and I sighed at its irritating insistence. Oh, for a reply to my advertisement! My life's desires had melted into one mighty yearning for a girl and centred in those "three lines, three times, for a dime." And no wonder, for Laura and the article, and the Professor's remark, had gotten on my nerves, and how could I ever hope to compete with any one "interesting" in my present submerged state? I did n't know what minute I'd fly to pieces, as it was, and—well, the danger line

once passed, I might be able to save Jack's love, but his faith in me would be gone. No, a girl was the only hope for me.

On Thursday, the seamstress arrived whom I had engaged three weeks before, when we had a girl. I helped her during some more spare moments. Please don't forget—it's the most important part of the story—the three meals I cooked, the three beds I made, the bath-room fixtures I scoured, the two porches I swept, the three children I bathed, the four extra meals I prepared and fed to the baby, the clothes I mended and put away, the 'phone I answered sixteen times to the hour, or the four callers I entertained. I had just tucked the kidlets in bed when the choir came to practise. They came to us because we could not leave the children to go to the church. After rehearsal some of the men stayed to smoke, but I was so tired that, throwing overboard all my theories of a wife's duty to her husband's friends, I excused myself and went to bed.

It seemed to me that my head had just touched the pillow when I heard a terrible "bark-bark" from Chubby's bed. I listened for a few moments, but, as it grew steadily worse, I roused Jack to light the gas and open the dampers. No father, I suppose, knows just how to sleep as a mother does. Why, Jack can get up and go all over the house, and I will never know it, but I hear the children if they turn over in their beds. "Shall I call the doctor?" is always Jack's first question. I thought not, this time, so we worked together for a couple of hours, Jack holding the baby over the register while I wrung out the hot cloths. Chubby was n't sick enough to scare us much, so I had to laugh at the funny picture Jack made, in his old bath-robe and bare feet, sitting there with one eye open and one shut. He indignantly replied that I looked just as funny in my faded kimona, with my Sis Hopkins pigtail sticking out behind. The magazine article flashed into my mind. Much chance I had then to compete with an "interesting" woman for my husband's admiration.

I tried to encourage myself with pictures of those other long nights we had waited together hand in hand for the birth-pangs that were to bring to us new lives, new loves, and of those other long, long nights when the issue of life and death seemed so uncertain that each looked strength into the other while the doctor and nurse did the work. But such times are the heights of marriage; they are not reached every day. After all, do they atone for every-day drowsiness, make up for the stupidity of weariness?

Finally we put Chubby, now breathing easily again, into our bed. He looked up at us all smiles and supreme satisfaction. "Ain't it nice?" he asked, referring to the attention and being in my big bed. The rascal! One can tell he is masculine, from his egotism.

Friday came, and still no answer to my advertisement. Laura was

having a tea, and Mother Latham had said that, if I would go, she would come over to take charge of the children. She thought it would do me good and freshen me up. Goodness knows, I needed something.

I began at breakfast to make plans. I hurried through the morning's work, bathed the children early, half prepared the evening meal, laid out the seamstress's afternoon work, mended my skirt-lining, and cleaned my gloves. By four o'clock I was about through, so I curled my hair and made a pretense of manicuring my nails while waiting for Mother Latham. I wanted to look as charming as possible to surprise Jack and make him forget my kimona and pigtail. I had n't been dressed nicely for a week. At five o'clock I was all ready and waiting for Mother Latham. At five thirty I 'phoned her, but could get no answer. At five forty-five she had not come, and the children were clamoring for supper. At six Jack came in.

"By George, Jen, you look swell! Where did you get that hat?"

I forgot my intended greeting of him, and his unexpected comment on my hat annoyed me, though I dare say almost any remark would have just then. "I've had that hat six months!" I exploded.

"I never saw it before," he apologized.

"Well, it's because I've never had a chance to wear it, that's why," I retorted.

He urged me to go on to Laura's and let him look after the children, but it was too late. I took off my finery and prepared supper, tears of—I don't know what—not exactly anger—perhaps vexation—falling into the coffee and soup.

As we were sitting down to our late supper, the 'phone rang. "Unavoidable delay—just could n't help it—knew you did n't care much about going, any way," Jack repeated to me in parrot-like tones, as he returned to the table after answering it. Then something snapped in my disposition.

"Oh, of course not. I was a fool to expect to go," I replied. "I'm just a drudge." This and other replies, best for my reputation not repeated, brought a pained look to Jack's eyes, but he did n't say a thing. Then, leaving the dishes as they were, I flounced off to bed with the children, where black shame possessed me for my petulance, blacker fear as to what Jack must think of me, and despair as to the outcome.

Saturday morning I gave up expecting to find any relief, and, though the future looked dark indeed and I saw life stretching on and on in one endless succession of dish-washing and cooking, housework and babies, musicless, bookless, partyless, I determined to make the best of it. If I could n't compete with other women in being attractive and interesting, I would at least make the home comfortable, and I would be agreeable. Last night's outburst had scared me, though

Jack had not referred to it. But alas for good intentions! There was Friday's sweeping, Saturday's kitchen work, and Sunday's baking all to do, besides—there's always a "besides" in housework—some washing and ironing to clothe the babies. Chubby could not go outdoors in the cold, and tugged at my skirts all the time while Ruth and Junior ran in and out, teasing him with his imprisonment. My! I got cross. When I picked up the divorce-article magazine I threw it clear into the wood-box. If Jack wanted the companionship of some other woman while I was slaving myself to death here for his children—well!

I certainly was an unkempt and bedraggled creature, both in body and mind, when Jack came home. After supper was disposed of, he remarked: "George and the Professor said they were coming up to-night. I thought it would be nice for me to go down-town and get some sandwiches." Then, noticing my look of despair, "Can't I do something for you, too? Order the meat for to-morrow's dinner—or something?"—with a man's vague idea of helping.

I looked down at the grimy Cinderella that I was, my mind a seething caldron of things done and left undone. My very soul seemed to be sinking into a black pool of dish-water. Then I broke out wildly: "Don't! Don't get anything to eat or to clean up. If you do, I'll lose my mind. I know I will." The pink parasol occurred to me. "Get me something foolish—something we don't need at all and can't possibly afford—maybe that might save me. I must," I pleaded incoherently, "I must, I *will*, get away from this grind that's killing our love."

"But——"

"Oh, please don't talk! Just go, quick! And get it pretty and—and not useful, not possibly useful, as you value my sanity!"

"Will an airship——"

"Oh, I don't care what! Just so it's senseless and pretty and—oh, don't you understand?"

"All right," he responded cheerily. "You keep your courage up, and I'll be back in a jiffy."

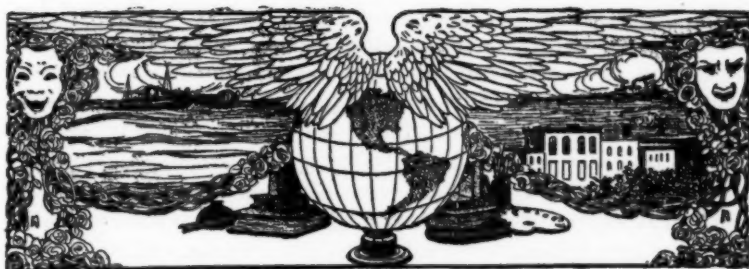
And he was, though the Professor and George Edwards had already arrived. They watched quite as breathlessly as I while I unwrapped the package.

It was a lovely, extravagant, Cloisonné vase!

"Oh, Jack," I almost sobbed, "Jack—it should have gone into the grocery bills!"

All three men laughed.

But I did n't care, for Jack had understood, and in that understanding my bogie fears, magazine article and all, were lost.



WAYS OF THE HOUR

A DEPARTMENT OF CURRENT COMMENT AND
CRITICISM—SANE, STIMULATING, OPTIMISTIC

BRING UP THE CHILD IN THE WAY HE SHOULD GO

THE habit of education is admirably on the increase in America. Between public facilities, and laws obliging us to utilize them, with or without the inclination, there is little excuse or opportunity for the child in America to grow up in ignorance of some things accounted an education. The quality and quantity only remain for discussion—in other words, are we bringing up the child in the way he should go? “Higher education” has apparently reached the limit, and some there be who think that it has gone beyond, for popular application; but the finer necessities of lower education may not yet have received all of the detail attention desirable.

For example, who knows when the question was not asked, “Why do our country boys always make for the city when they graduate from the district school?” and who knows but the answer lies in this matter of education? What have they always been taught—how to be farmers, or how to be clerks and business men? What inclinations and ambitions alone are roused in them by what they learn? Reading, writing, arithmetic, history, geography, a little of the sciences, a little of the languages, all broaden, benefit, and tend to make better citizens in any walk of life; but equally, also, they all tempt the boy to get out into the world and into business, that he may investigate farther for himself, apply what he has learned, and add to it. On the other hand, what have they learned to give interest to farming. Knowledge is power on the farm as truly as in politics or Wall Street. But by going to school

the boy learns nothing more about farming. He knows it only as the dull routine of eternal drudgery which has bent his father's back, and which will bend his if he forsakes the ambitions a little schooling has roused in him, and learns of his father what he learned of his grandfather, how to do certain things which must be done—goodness only knows and nobody cares why—and which constitute the sum and substance of farming. There's nothing new in it, nothing interesting, nothing inspiring, nothing to be helped by his education. He looks upon it only as a desperate last resort, if necessity compels, or if all that he has learned in school has failed to fit him for something better. There has been nothing to suggest to him that possibly, with the infinite aids of science in farming, there may be *nothing* better—better satisfying, better compensating, or easier than a life of scientific farming. It is an exception when a boy with brains and energy resists the temptation to apply the result of his studies in the only fields where it is directly applicable, so far as he can see—which are not the green fields of nature.

As a nation, we fully appreciate the value of science in farming. We expend millions of dollars, annually, through the bureaus of our National Agricultural Department for the benefit of the farms and farmers of America. Everybody knows the infinite value of the work which has been accomplished, and when the boy with brains and energy does resist those first temptations and turns investigative attention to farming, he soon finds vast stores of information gathered for him. He studies by himself the mysteries of the art, as he studied in school his geography and history, and presently he is one of the monarchs of America, making his farm a gold mine.

Now, the point is this: when we have all the information and scientific knowledge gathered at fabulous expense (free to every farmer who will send for it), all the whys and wherefores making farming an intensely interesting and profitable art, hidden away where only those get at it who by some accident are forced to resort to farming, and who have the brains and energy and inclination to investigate the wonderful discoveries and new and helpful ideas which have cost the country so much, in an earnest effort to improve the farms and farmers, why in the name of common-sense should not the elements of it all be put into text-books for our public schools, to help boys to *become* farmers? Why should not the science of agriculture be at least an important fact in the common-school curriculum? Would it hurt even the city boy and girl to know a little about how things grow, and why and where, and the art of making the best of Nature? Would not some knowledge of the science of nature make any boy or girl happier for life, even if he or she never saw a farm? It would at least make it possible for the boy when he graduates to turn to farming as he now

turns to business, with something of a practical foundation, and a new sense that farming is not, in reality, the same old limited grind and drudgery of his father and grandfather.

WILLARD FRENCH

SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CRIMINALS

WE have societies for the protection of almost everything—why not a society for the protection of criminals?

Better jails are demanded. It is very unpleasant for any self-respecting criminal, especially when he has been brought up in refined surroundings, which is not infrequently the case, to have to eat coarse food and associate with vulgar people.

Our methods of investigating criminals, with a view to ascertaining their guilt, are by no means perfect.

Any one with money is likely to be brought into a court at any time, and rudely questioned by an unfeeling judge.

It is true that if a very large amount is involved, one is treated with a certain consideration; but even this is not what it ought to be.

As the case stands at present, no great criminal is really safe from annoyance. His picture may be published in the papers, editorials reflecting upon his character may be printed at any moment, and he may have to put up a large amount of bail. This is often inconvenient, especially when one's money is tied up in Wall Street.

This is a free country. Every criminal ought to be protected from injury.

THOMAS L. MASSON

A BRIEF FOR BREVITY

A PUBLIC speaker was once asked how much time he would need to prepare an address on a certain subject. He replied: "If I am to speak only half an hour, I shall need a week; if an hour, three days; if as long as I please, I am ready now." A message of thirty-five words, written by a woman in answer to a telegram, was reduced by an expert to *one* without loss of efficiency. Who doubts that the average man could put his written or spoken thoughts into fewer words than he uses—or that the average woman ought to?

Most modern writers use too many words and too long ones. A common offense is the superfluous *out* in *watch out*, *win out*, *try out*, etc. To read of a candidate being tried out suggests lard-rendering,

or "something humorous, like death by boiling oil." In most cases, *up* need not follow *open*, *back*, *fill*, *cover*, etc. *Forwards*, *backwards*, *towards*, *approve of*, *equally as*, need pruning. Why use the longer *as though* for *as if*, or *during* for *in*? Why say you are *aggravated* or *provoked* when you are merely vexed? Why *anticipate* what you expect, or *expect* what you simply think? Why *commence*, *conclude*, *remit*, *settle*, or *donate*, when you can much better begin, close, send, pay, and give? Why prefer *lengthy* to *long*, *avocation* to *vocation*, *widow-woman* to *widow*, or *individual* to *person*?

It might be supposed that the illiterate would find it easier to use short words, yet we hear from them such elongations as *attackted*, *telegraphed*, *preventative*, *agriculturalist*, and *casuality*. It would seem that there is a form of mental laziness which prefers the long way around to the trouble of finding a short cut.

"Time is money," is a business maxim, and railway companies no longer name, but more simply number, their locomotives; and the old-time *gentlemen's room* and *ladies' room* have given way to *men* and *women* in their stations. On the other hand, street-railways have displaced the eminently fit *driver* for the longer *motorman*, a monstrosity which never should have been admitted to the language. Men who drive are drivers—why not?

The automobile has foisted on us that foolish word *chauffeur*. Whoever first called an automobile driver a *chauffeur* committed a crime. At least, he might have unmasked his villainy and made him a *stoker*, which is a good English translation and shows its inaptness frankly. Needless words which apply for positions not vacant—and get them—are impudent parasites, drones in the hive. Foreign words of this class, which seek to supplant better ones already here, should be ruthlessly turned back, like pauper immigrants.

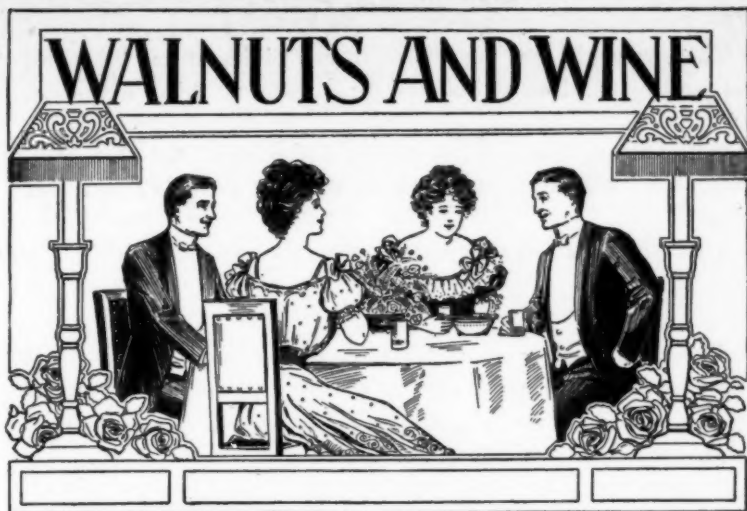
Was it Newton who declared that, under pressure enough, the substance of our globe could be got into a cubic inch of space? Perhaps not all the world's wisdom could be crammed into one word, but certainly much of its foolishness could.

However, though a wasteful use of words is to be avoided, a too frugal one may not always be desirable. If you feel you must tell a man he's a liar, you might well be excused for not putting the information too concisely—especially if he is bigger than you are. Therefore—to sum up—let us be brief, but not *too* brief.

FRANK M. BICKNELL



A PERSON throws light on his own character when he goes around casting reflections on that of others.



THE GIGGLESHERE MYSTERY

OR

SAVED BY A SISTER

By Clifton B. Dowd

(Author of "Picking Cinders With Gladys," etc.)

I.

"All is lost!" emitted Vladimir von Flannagan bitterly.

So saying, the handsome young man took from his desk a revolver about a foot long, and looked it tenderly in the eye. At this moment a beautiful young girl rumbled up.

"Stop!" she yelped piercingly. "Oh, my brother, what does this mean?"

Vladimir had the drop on himself, so for a moment he was afraid to move. Finally, however, he lowered the murderous-looking hardware and turned to her.

"It means, Aphasia, that I am tired of life," he let loose despairingly. "Gwendolyn Gigglesmere has jilted me!"

"But," said the fair girl, "I thought you were betrothed. What has changed her?"

"She has fallen in love with that French artist, Armand de Ciseaux."

"But she hardly knows him!"

"True," assented her brother gloomily, "but she says he must and shall be hers. He is to be at the ball to-night."

Walnuts and Wine

The lovely girl put one of her dainty digits to her brimming brow and assumed an attitude of deep thought. After a moment she spoke.

"Be not cast down, Vladimir von Flannagan," she said. "I, your sister, will save you. Go to the ball to-night, and fear naught."

So saying, the fair girl beat it out of the room.

II.

The superb ball-room of the Gigglesmere mansion was ablaze with lights and crowded with beautiful men and distinguished-looking women. From the gowns of the latter, one might have judged it to be a coming-out party.

Vladimir von Flannagan was early on the job, anxiously awaiting developments. His former fiancée was flitting to and fro among her guests. Aphasia was not visible, nor was Vladimir's hated rival.

Suddenly there was a commotion, and dainty débutantes and grizzled dowagers could be heard murmuring, "He comes! 'T is he!" as a handsome foreigner entered the spacious ball-room. It was Armand de Ciseaux, the famous French colorist.

Gwendolyn, who was some distance away, had seen him, and it was plain that she awaited his coming with great eagerness. As he approached, Aphasia von Flannagan slipped out from the friends who had surrounded her and stood close beside Gwendolyn, who was unconscious of her presence.

Armand de Ciseaux stopped suddenly, and an expression of intense agony came over his skilfully chiselled features. Placing his hands convulsively over his eyes, he reeled from the room. Nor did he reappear.

III.

Two weeks later, Society was astonished to learn that De Ciseaux had suddenly returned to France, and that Vladimir von Flannagan and Gwendolyn Gigglesmere were once more betrothed.

It was soon after this that Vladimir sought his sister.

"Aphasia," he gulped, "I owe my happiness to you, I know. But you have n't told me how you did it. How did you manage to send the Ciseaux person away?"

The fair girl grinned.

"It was a cinch, Vladimir," she replied sweetly. "I happened to know that Gwendolyn had gotten a new mauve ball gown for the

Walnuts and Wine

occasion, so I wore my scarlet, and at the psychological moment I went and stood beside her."

"But I don't understand," came back Vladimir. "What difference——"

"Vladimir," evaporated his sister pityingly, "you can't hope to understand. If you were a woman or an artist, you would, but you are merely a man."



HIS OWN BLAME

By J. J. O'Connell

For years he kept us on the rack;

Now he is lying mute.

There is not one to wish him back—

In life he played the flute.



HE HAD HIM

A young "briefless" was perambulating the courts with an air of scarcely being able to find time to do anything, when his boy tracked him down in one of the corridors.

"Oh, sir," said the boy, "there is a man at your office with a brief."

"What, a brief? Great heavens!"

And the young fellow began to run through the passages as fast as he could, for fear the prey should escape him.

"Stop, sir, stop!" cried the boy, who could scarcely keep pace. "You need n't hurry, sir. I've locked him in."

M. L. Hayward



INURED TO IT

Not so long ago a Chicago clergyman christened the first baby of a bright young woman, a graduate of a smart woman's college, and a person of many ingenious ideas. Now, babies usually cry when they are being christened, but this one was as quiet as a lamb, and throughout the ceremony smiled beautifully in the face of the minister.

"I must congratulate you on this child," said the good man at the conclusion of the ceremony. "I have christened a thousand babies, but never before have I acted for one that behaved so well as yours."

"His good behavior is easily explained," said the young matron. "His father and I, with a pail of water, have been practising christening upon him for the last two weeks."

Edwin Tarrisse

Walnuts and Wine

How THEY SHOULD LOOK

The bartender—All smiles.
The auctioneer—Morbid and forbidding.
The bridge fiend—Wistful.
The waiter—Tipsy.
The lumberman—Bored.
The glazier—With a pained expression.
The manicure—Handsome.
The bucket-shop manager—Pale.
The bride—Well-groomed.
The police-court judge—Fine.
The night-watchmen—Mournful.
The bootblack—With a shining countenance.
The poker-player—Winsome.
The rah-rah boy—Cheerful.
The marble-cutter—With a stony stare.
The tobacconist—Puffed-up.
The confectioner—Sweet.
The paperhanger—Wall-eyed.
The carpenter—Chipper. You never saw one plain.
The aviator—Looks down on us.

Sam S. Stinson

PRACTICAL PEG

By Margaret G. Hays

"I'm 'fraid that I might starve some day;
The price of food's so high.
Meat, fish, and soap, and veg'tables,
Are very dear, so I
Am going out in the garden,"
Smiles practical Miss Peg,
"To plant this little egg-plant so's
I'll always have an egg."

A GOOD REASON

Lula was watching her mother working among the flowers.
"Mamma, I know why flowers grow," she said; "they want to get
out of the dirt."

Hugh Morist

We should respect the rights of all creatures. Even the Crow
considers his Caws to be righteous.

H. D. G.

Walnuts and Wine

PROVED

The little boy had persisted in trying to annoy all the passengers in the car. At one of the stations a very fashionably dressed lady took the seat directly back of him. He climbed up on the seat and began roguishly to wink at her.

"Johnny," said his patient mother, "you must not wink at ladies. That is naughty. If you do, you will never grow big."

"Why, Ma," was the startling reply, "that fat man across the aisle winked at the lady, and he is big." *Merle M. Hoover*

IN THE ONE-"GALLUS" COUNTRY

A Northerner asked a Cracker if he thought he could get a new pair of suspenders at the ferry store. After he had ridden on, the half-grown son of the Cracker asked, "Pap, what's them?"

"I reckon they be galluses," was the reply.

"But, Pap, what's he a-goin' for to git a *par* fur? D'ye reck'n he's got *two* par o' briches?" *C. Q. W.*

WHAT THEY LOOK LIKE

"Mornin', Sis Judy," called a neighbor's cook to our good old mammy. "I heah dat Skeeter Jim is dun got him a new wife. I hope she leetle fatter 'n dat pindlin', no count streak-o'-lean!"

"Fatter 'n him?" Mammy replied, rolling her eyes and clasp-
ing her own fat hands. "Lawsy, chile, dee jes lak a needle an' a haystack!" *Mary Coles Carrington*

SAGACITY

One would have it that a collie is the most sagacious of dogs, while the other stood up for the setter.

"I once owned a setter," declared the latter, "which was very intelligent. I had him on the street one day, and he acted so queerly about a certain man we met that I asked the man his name, and——"

"Oh, that's an old story!" the collie's advocate broke in sneeringly. "The man's name was Partridge, of course, and because of that the dog came to a set. Ho, ho! Come again!"

"You're mistaken," rejoined the other suavely. "The dog didn't come quite to a set, though almost. As a matter of fact, the man's name was Quayle, and the dog hesitated on account of the spelling!" *P. R. Benson*

Walnuts and Wine

BREAKING THE NEWS GENTLY

The sands of the old year were running low. Soon 1910 would be numbered with the past.

In an outlying police station a solitary deskman, his feet on a table and his head thrown back, was keeping lonely vigil. The insistent bur-r-r-ring of the telephone half aroused him to the realities of life.

When the receiver had been lifted from its hook, a gruff voice at the other end of the line demanded:

"Is this May 19-11?"

"Gosh, no!" answered the sleepy deskman. "This is only New Year's eve."

John E. Quinn

A PROBLEM

By Charles C. Jones

To live by rule seems nice, I say:

It must be wondrous bliss;

But how can mortal do it, pray,
this? life's all mixed When like

THAT BOY!

The mother heard a great commotion, as of cyclones mixed up with battering-rams, and she hurried upstairs to discover what was the matter. There she found Tommie sitting in the middle of the floor with a broad smile on his face.

"Oh, Mama," said he delightedly, "I've locked Grandpa and Uncle George in the cupboard, and when they get a little angrier I am going to play Daniel in the lion's den."

J. B. Leary

A CATASTROPHE

One of the curious characteristics of the old-time darkies is their ability to make their stories always intelligible, no matter how fully garnished with the big words which delight their souls.

"Aunt Dilsey," I recently asked my good old Mammy, "what has become of young Tom Billups?"

"De lan' sakes, Miss Baby," she replied, with uplifted hands and eyes like saucers. "He dun run off, 'way las' spring, to one er dese heah *rank* places, whar dee raises de cattle, an' we ain' got no news o' him, nary word—'cep'n' 't is one dese sump'n' *near* picture cyards—an' I jes b'lieve, Miss Baby, dat de boy's *dun* been *catnipped*!"

Mary Coles Carrington

Walnuts and Wine



Mother's Day

Is when she moulds the habits, health and beauty of her children. Beauty and softness of skin texture are the natural heritage of nearly all infants. Unfortunately, this birth boon is often undervalued and neglected, with the result that the beauty gradually disappears.

The use of common impure soaps is answerable for much of this skin deterioration, and for this there is no excuse, since the best and purest of all skin soaps

Pears' Soap

is really more economical than ordinary soaps, because of the fact that it lasts twice as long. The pre-eminence of Pears' Soap all the world over is easily accounted for. It is composed entirely of natural beauty preserving ingredients. Its emollient action ensures the skin of a permanent softness and delicacy of color, and exercises a protective influence that keeps it in perfect condition.

Pears is all solid soap purity and goodness having no water mixed with it, and being unaffected by heat or cold. Since 1789 Pears has been the Mother's Soap of the world.

The general idea of Mother's Day is a simultaneous observance in every country of the love and reverence men, women and children owe to a good mother. The second Sunday in May is observed as Mother's Day throughout the United States. The Movement is not denominational—Every society and organization is asked to unite in making the observance universal. Do some distinct act of kindness to the sick or unfortunate, in loving remembrance of your mother. The White Carnation is the Mother's Day special flower.

OF ALL SCENTED SOAPS PEAR'S OTTO OF ROSE IS THE BEST.

"All rights secured."

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

DRAWING THE LINE

By Ruth Kauffman

You advertised fer help to-day?
What kin I do? Well, I kin *stay*.
An' I kin scrub an' wash an' dust,
An' wait on table if I must;
An' I kin run a sew'-machine,
An' mind yer kids an' keep 'um clean;
I kin be cook er lady's maid.
What wages did you say you paid?

A character? Yes, lots of 'um.
You 'll never find me quarrelsome;
I know me place: that 's one thing, ma'am;
An' I 've a temper like a lamb.
Experience? Twelve years of it.
An' work? I don't know how to quit!
I'm up at six, to bed at ten,
An' don't go chasin' any men.

The furnace? Oh, yes, Missus, sure;
An' polish all the furniture;
An' clear the snow, an' press his clo'es.
I'm willin' fer all work I knows.
There! Yours me knees, me hands, me mind.
I'll come to-night; you 're very kind.

Caps, did you say? No *rats* ner *braid*?
That 's too much sacrifice fer trade!
Me beauty gone? Me whole career?
I understand, ma'am, what you fear:
I'd rival you in Some-one's eye.
No wages buy me *looks*. Good-by!

GLOBE-TROTTERS PLUS

A number of tourists were recently looking down the crater of Vesuvius. An American gentleman said to his companion:

"That looks a good deal like the infernal regions."

An English lady, overhearing the remark, said to another:

"Good gracious! how these Americans do travel!"

P. R. H.

Walnuts and Wine



The fragrance of honeyed
apple blossoms in May
is not more alluring than
the goodness of

NABISCO
Sugar Wafers

— dessert confections
beyond compare.

Serve NABISCO as
you will—with ices or
beverages — they are
always welcome, always
appropriate.

In ten cent tins

Also in twenty-five cent tins

CHOCOLATE TOKENS—
Another delightful dessert
confection. Coated with
smooth, rich chocolate.

**NATIONAL
BISCUIT
COMPANY**

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

A TIMELY WARNING

A lady of ample proportions, whose plump arms were piled to her chin with packages, was picking her way carefully over the icy pavement in front of the Union League in Philadelphia, when, in spite of her caution, her feet slipped from under her, and the stout shopper instantly lay on her back. A Club member rushed down the steps to her assistance, but, owing to the fact that she insisted upon clinging to her bundles, he was unable to raise her. While she lay struggling and floundering like a stranded whale, a laundry-wagon driver yelled warningly: "Set on her head, boss, er she 'll bust her harness!"

Caroline Lockhart

SOME REPUBLICANS THERE

After the big Andrew Jackson Day banquet in Baltimore, a prominent Republican thus greeted an equally well-known Democrat:

"I understand there were some Republicans at the banquet last night."

"Oh, yes," said the Democrat genially. "One waited on me."

Marie Phelan

GETTING ALONG

Commercial sailing in the age of steam is perhaps conducive to philosophic calm. Pierre and Jacques, skippers both of ancient schooners in the carrying trade of the Great Lakes—they came of a volatile race, but there was nothing volatile about their exchange of civilities, as their ships passed one day:

"Hello, Jacques!"

"Hello, Pierre!"

Long pause, and then:

"How you geet 'long?"

"Oh, I geet 'long poot' well. How you geet 'long?"

"Oh, I geet 'long poot' well."

The vessels drew apart—already it was necessary to shout. That entailed effort, but Jacques was not done.

"You ol' seeck fadder—how he geet 'long?" he called out.

And Pierre's voice came back over the water: "Oh, he geet 'long poot' well. He ben die las' week!"

P. R. Benson

NEW NAME

"I hear cider kills microbes."

"Yes, now they call it germicider."

La Touche Hancock

If Venus Had Arms



NONE GENUINE WITHOUT THIS SIGNATURE

W. K. Kellogg

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

ALLITERATED ADAGES

"T IS more blessed to bestow than to beget. (?)

THERE'S a fatality that fashions our fortunes.

POSTPONE the punishment and pervert the progeny.

A PARCEL of pulchritude is a perpetual picnic.

A PEREGRINATING pebble procures no profits.

THE mills of the gods are poky, but they pulverize perfectly.

THE pirate who purloins my portemonnaie pilfers piffle.

Ellis O. Jones

EDITORIAL

By Clara O'Neill

Successful modern editors

Are young, as it appears,

Yet those I've seen have mostly been

In their declining years.

HOW THE VACUUM WAS OBTAINED

Two drummers on the way from Chicago to Cleveland became involved in an argument as to the action of the vacuum brake.

"I tell you that it is the inflation of the tube that stops the train!" exclaimed one of the commercial travellers.

"Nothing of the sort!" was the equally emphatic contention of the other drummer. "It's the output of the exhaustion."

They continued to argue in this fashion until the train pulled into Cleveland, when it was decided to submit the matter to the decision of the engineer. That individual good-naturedly assented to act as arbitrator, and, leaning out of the window of his cab, listened condescendingly to the arguments of both men. Finally he said:

"As a matter of fact, gents, you're both wrong about the working of the vacuum-brake. It's simple and easy to understand. When we want to stop the train we just turn this tap, which fills the pipe with vacuum."

Edwin Tarrisse

Walnuts and Wine

Win Profit and Prestige as Local Agent for New Printype Oliver Typewriter —the Latest Wonder in Typewriterdome

On top of all the innovations that have given The Oliver Typewriter such amazing success and sales, we have placed the crowning improvement—PRINTYPE! The Oliver Typewriter now *typewrites print*.

To the first acceptable man in each locality where we have no local agent, we offer the *exclusive agency* for the Oliver Typewriter, which carries with it absolute control of all sales of Printype Oliver Typewriters in the territory assigned.

Think of the money making possibilities of an agency which enables you to step into a man's office and say: "I represent the only typewriter in the world that successfully typewrites print!"

Overwhelming Public Demand for Printype

Printype, the beautiful new type face, unobtrusively introduced to the public by The Oliver Typewriter Company a year ago, is today the reigning favorite in Typewriterdome.

The beauty—the individuality—of Printype has turned the heads of some of the greatest business executives of the country.

Printype — OLIVER Typewriter

The Standard Visible Writer

If you have not had the pleasure of an introduction to Printype ask for a copy of our pamphlet—

"A Revolution in Typewriter Type"

Printype is an adaptation for the typewriter of the regular book type universally used on printing presses.

An old friend in a captivating new dress—the last word in typewriter type-style. It is twice as artistic and easy to read as the old-style, sharp, thin outline letters and numerals used on all other typewriters.

Although The Printype Oliver Typewriter is worth a premium, we placed the complete machine on the market at the regular catalog price.

The effect was electrical. Inquiries came thick and fast. Demands for demonstrations kept our Local Agencies working at high tension. Sales jumped. Public appreciation of the innovation was so impressively shown in actual orders that today one-third of our total output of Oliver Typewriters are "Printypes."

Belongs Exclusively to the Oliver

The Oliver Typewriter Company originated "Printype." We control it. The Oliver Type-



writer is the only writing machine in the world that successfully *typewrites print*.

This triumph in typewriter type, added to the numerous other exclusive features of The Oliver Typewriter, greatly increases the value of our Local Agency Franchise. It puts our great Sales Organization still farther in the lead.

It's Your Supreme Opportunity

We distribute Oliver Typewriters through a world-wide Agency System. Each Local Agent is given exclusive control of all sales of new Oliver Typewriters in the territory assigned during the entire life of the arrangement. The demand for demonstrations of The Printype Oliver Typewriter necessitates a heavy increase in our force of Local Agents.

Every city, every town, every village must be quickly assigned, so that the vast number of inquiries that are pouring into the General Offices may have prompt, personal attention. This is undoubtedly the greatest business opportunity of your life. Ask for the details of our Exclusive Agency Proposition. Get posted on the profit-possibilities. Remember that a Local Agency Contract is an exclusive Franchise that entitles you to all the profit on every sale made in the specified territory.

"17 Cents a Day" Booms Sales

As local agent for The Oliver Typewriter you can offer the liberal, attractive terms of "17 Cents a Day." You can accept any make of old machine your customer may own, to apply on the small first payment.

We do not surround our Local Agents with annoying rules and restrictions. In the territory assigned them, they are given full control. Loyal, efficient service wins generous recognition. Exceptional ability is rewarded by promotion to more important positions in the Oliver Organization. Whether you can give your entire time to work or only an hour or two a day, you cannot afford to miss this wonderful money-making opportunity.

Rush Agency Application Applications should be mailed promptly, as the territory is being assigned very rapidly. Interesting literature, including the "Printype Book" and "The Opportunity Book," together with complete information regarding Local Agency Plan, will be sent by first mail.

Address Agency Department

(107)

The Oliver Typewriter Company, 299 Oliver Typewriter Building, Chicago

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

OH, SAY, LADIES!

NOTE: Judge Fallon, of Boston, has ruled that if a married woman strikes, punches, or otherwise assaults another person, the husband, if present during the assault, is legally responsible, and not the wife.

By W. J. Lampton

Gee whiz,
What woman's luck this is!
Now may the married women rise
And black their loving husbands' eyes,
And slug them all around the home,
From cellar stairs to attic dome,
And punch them in the slats until
It makes the helpless victims ill,
And they can't say a word because,
By this construction of the laws,
The husband, who is present, is
Responsible and hence—Gee whiz!



THE LAW'S LIMIT

A big, handsome lawyer from one of the Southern States presented himself at the door of the Supreme Court when there was an important case being argued. He passed by the long line of people waiting patiently for their turn to come, but was suddenly halted at the entrance to the chamber.

"Are you a member of this bar?" asked the doorkeeper.

"Well—er—no, not exactly, but I'm a practising lawyer."

"Then, you'll have to stand in line back there," was the response.

The Southerner turned away after pressing his point a little longer. There was an old white-haired negro standing near him, in the corridor, and to him the lawyer said:

"Look here, Uncle, this is an outrage! Why, I have practised law for thirty years, and that fellow won't let me in there."

"Well, boss," replied the old darky, looking up at him respectfully, "dat's all so, I guess, but you got to be powerful keerful round heah, fo' if you git in contempt of dat dere court, dere ain't nobody left to 'peal to but Gord-a-mighty."

James Spiller



PARAPLUIE PRATTLE

"Why did n't you bring my umbrella back before?"

"It's been raining all the week."

Dulcimer Dawson

Walnuts and Wine



THE
STANDARD
FROM
1780 to 1911

BAKER'S CHOCOLATE

FINEST IN THE WORLD FOR
COOKING AND DRINKING.

Unequaled for smoothness, delicacy,
natural flavor and that uniformity
which insures best results.



IT IS ABSOLUTELY PURE

BEWARE OF IMITATIONS; the genuine is
put up in Blue Wrapper and Yellow Label and
with our trade-mark on the back.

*BOOKLET OF CHOICE
RECIPES SENT FREE*

Walter Baker & Co. Ltd.

Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

Established 1780

DORCHESTER, MASS.

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Walnuts and Wine

NEW PATRIOTISM

A class in one of Boston's cultured schools was discussing the subject "patriotism," and the teacher called on each pupil in turn to tell of some article they possessed that would illustrate love of their country.

"We have a fine large flag-pole and a handsome flag at my house," said one girl.

"I've got a gun that my uncle used in the Civil War, when he fought to preserve the Union," called out a bright-eyed boy.

"My father was killed in 1862 in a big battle, and my mother has his picture hung in the parlor. He wears the uniform of a captain in the Union army," was the next answer.

Others had similar references to the part their family had taken in upholding the Union in the Civil War, but finally a boy was reached who had no answer to make.

"Can you not think of anything you or your mother has that would show love for your country?"

The boy looked dejected for a moment, and then his face lit up with enthusiasm. "Yes," he replied; "my mother has a new union suit."

L. M. Libbey

GETTING OUT THE STRENGTH

Among one of the applicants for the cookship in a Richmond household was a rather dashing yellow girl. The lady of the house was rather doubtful as to the ability of the mulatto, and therefore propounded more than the usual number of questions to her. Some were fairly satisfactory; but when the interrogatories touched the question of making tea, the negotiations were declared off.

"How long do you boil tea?"

"Well, ma'am," said the girl, "dat's matter of taste, ain't it? Some folks biles it longer, an' some shorter."

"But you *do* boil it?"

"Cert'n'y, ma'am, I biles it. Pussunly, I always thought dat two hours was long 'nough to bile any tea. Yo' kin git de stren'th outer any kind of tea in dat time."

Fenimore Martin

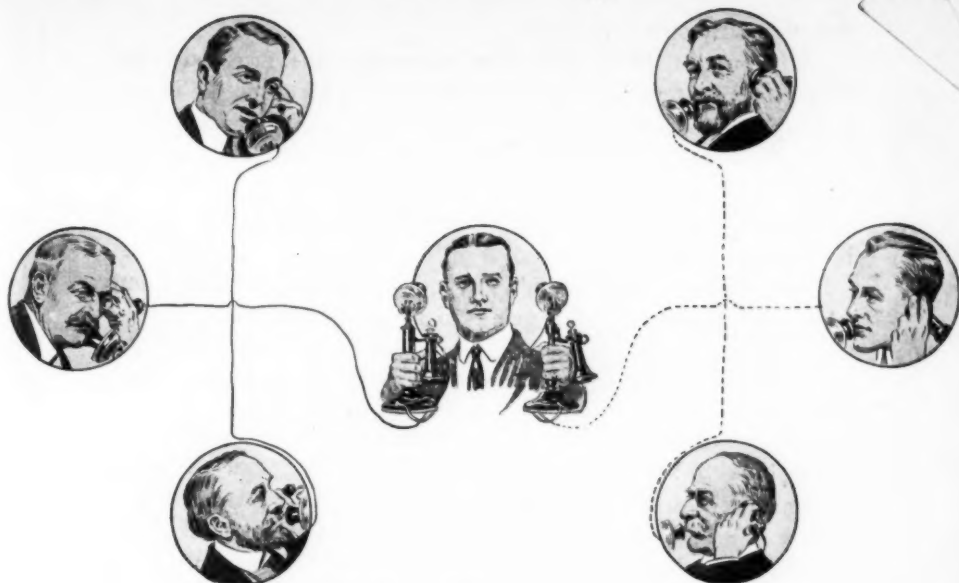
DOUBLED-POINTED

Bess: "I'm at a loss to understand just what Mr. Blank meant when I told him my age was twenty-five."

Tess: "What did he say?"

Bess: "That I did n't look it."

George Frederick Wilson



Half Service Or Double Expense

TWO telephone systems in one town mean a divided community or a forced duplication of apparatus and expense.

Some of the people are connected with one system, some are connected with the other system; and each group receives partial service.

Only those receive full service who subscribe for the telephones of both systems.

Neither system can fully meet the needs of the public, any more than a single system could meet the needs of the public if cut in two and half the telephones discontinued.

What is true of a single community is true of the country at large.

The Bell System is established on the principle of one system and one policy, to meet the demands for universal service, a whole service for all the people.



**AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY
AND ASSOCIATED COMPANIES**

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

BROTHER'S BRIGHT PROSPECTS

A group of little girls were discussing the merits of the babies in their families, and each was striving to outdo the others in reciting the virtues and achievements of the home infant.

"My little sister is only seven months old, and she has three teeth," said one.

"My little brother is only six months old, and he has four," boasted a second.

"My little brother has n't any yet," ventured a third, "but when his do come they're going to be gold ones."

Edmund Moberly

THE LIMIT

The services in the chapel of a certain Western university are from time to time conducted by eminent clergymen of many denominations and from many cities.

On one occasion, when one of these visiting divines asked the president how long he should speak, that witty officer replied:

"There is no limit, Doctor, upon the time you may preach; but I may tell you that there is a tradition here that the most souls are saved during the first twenty-five minutes."

Elgin Burroughs

HOPE FOR THE AEROPLANE

By L. B. Coley

"The aeroplane has come to stay"—

We hear this everywhere.

Perhaps in time 't will get so it

Can stay up in the air.

FOREHANDED WORKMEN

An industrial commission appointed by Congress was conducting certain investigations with reference to the operation of mills and factories in various parts of the country.

The investigators were in one mill in a Southwestern State when the whistle blew for noon. The operatives put up their tools and vanished as if by magic.

"Do all the workmen drop their tools the instant the whistle blows?" asked one of the commission.

"No, not all," answered the man who was acting as guide. "The more orderly have their tools all put away before that time."

T.

The Grand Finale to the
World's Best Dinners

LIQUEUR
PÈRES
CHARTREUX

—GREEN AND YELLOW—

The Exquisite Cordial of the Centuries

At first-class Wine Merchants, Grocers, Hotels, Cafés.
Bâtjer & Co., 45 Broadway, New York, N. Y.
Sole Agents for United States.



EVERYBODY is reading **Arnold Bennett**, talking **Arnold Bennett**, discussing **Arnold Bennett**—Novelist, Essayist, Dramatist.

That's why **The Book News Monthly** is printing "**Paris Nights**" by **Arnold Bennett**.

"**Paris Nights**" has never before appeared in America—the sketches that comprise it will be a literary sensation of the year.

A serial story by Bennett to run parallel with the Paris Sketches will begin in the June number.

Begin your subscription to America's most popular book magazine with the May number, which will have first instalment of **Paris Nights**, and receive thirteen numbers for **\$1.00**, the usual annual subscription price.

THE BOOK NEWS MONTHLY
PHILADELPHIA AND NEW YORK

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

OLE'S FAITH

Among the recent patrons of the healing waters of Hunter's Hot Springs, Montana, was a Swede named Oleson, who was covered with boils from head to foot.

"Well, Ole," inquired a solicitous acquaintance, "do you think you 're going to die?"

"I tank so," replied Ole philosophically. "I tank I bane goin' to God in leetle pieces."

Caroline Lockhart

NOT DEAD YET

Little Clara, aged three, was always asking for dried apples. Her mother, fearing this diet might lead to harm, told her of a boy who had eaten dried apples which swelled in his stomach and caused his death. Clara was much impressed, but the temptation was strong, and one day, when she had been absent for a time, the piping voice came triumphantly from the room where the strings of apples hung: "Muvver, I ain't dead yet."

H. E. Zimmerman

A BIT PREMATURE

Old Jake La Rue was a very crusty man, full of gouty aches due to age and overeating. He lost patience with his physician one day because the latter did not make enough fuss over the pain his patient suffered.

"Doctor," he thundered, "you don't understand! You don't seem to grasp the case! You talk as though there were nothing the matter, whereas I am suffering the torments of the damned!"

"What, already?" queried the doctor, in apparent amazement.

R. M. Winans

NOTES FOR A CHORUS GIRL

A popular soprano is said to have a voice of fine timbre, a willowy figure, cherry lips, chestnut hair, and hazel eyes. She must have been raised in the lumber regions.

Ella Hutchison Ellwanger

MAL DE MER

A Philadelphian, on his way to Europe, was experiencing seasickness for the first time. Calling his wife to his bedside, he said in a weak voice: "Jenny, my will is in the Commercial Trust Company's care. Everything is left to you, dear. My various stocks you will find in my safe-deposit box." Then he said fervently: "And, Jenny, bury me on the other side. I can't stand this trip again, alive or dead."

Joe King

Walnuts and Wine



The worse
the paint or the
floor looks the louder
the call for that big cake of

SAPOLIO

It never shirks work. It never fails to clean. It will take care of marble, mosaic or kitchen floors, paint, bath-rooms, pans, kettles, etc. Experiment if you will, but **you know Sapolio will do it!**

The big, solid, compressed cake is most economical.

Cleans, Scours, Polishes—Works Without Waste

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

A STRANGE SPECIES OF DEER

Just above the buffet in the dining-room of a Richmond house there hangs a huge, finely mounted antlered head. This trophy of the owner's hunting prowess is fastened so firmly to the wall that the glistening neck seems to be coming right out through the plaster.

When a little boy from the city saw this decoration for the first time, he eyed it with considerable curiosity and very evident uneasiness. It looked almost too lifelike for comfort.

Finally the youngster asked to be excused and slipped from his chair, going into the next room. He returned to the dining-room flushed with embarrassment.

"What's the matter, Harry?" asked his host.

"I wanted to see," explained the child sheepishly, "if that animal's legs were really as long as that, or if he were standing on something in the next room."

Howard Morse

WHERE JONES WENT

A series of revival services was being held in a Western city, and placards giving notice of the services were posted in conspicuous places. One day the following notice was posted: "Hell, Its Location and Absolute Certainty. Thomas Jones, baritone soloist, will sing 'Tell Mother I'll Be There.'" *L. M. Libbey*

PRIDE GOETH, ETC.

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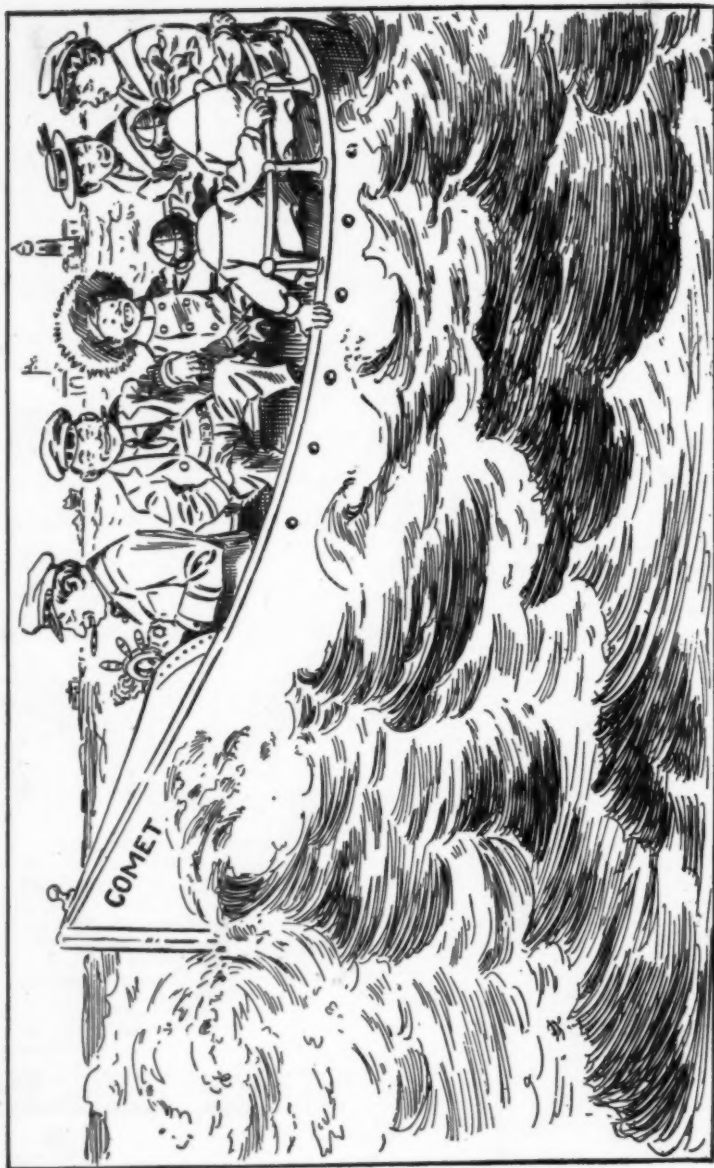


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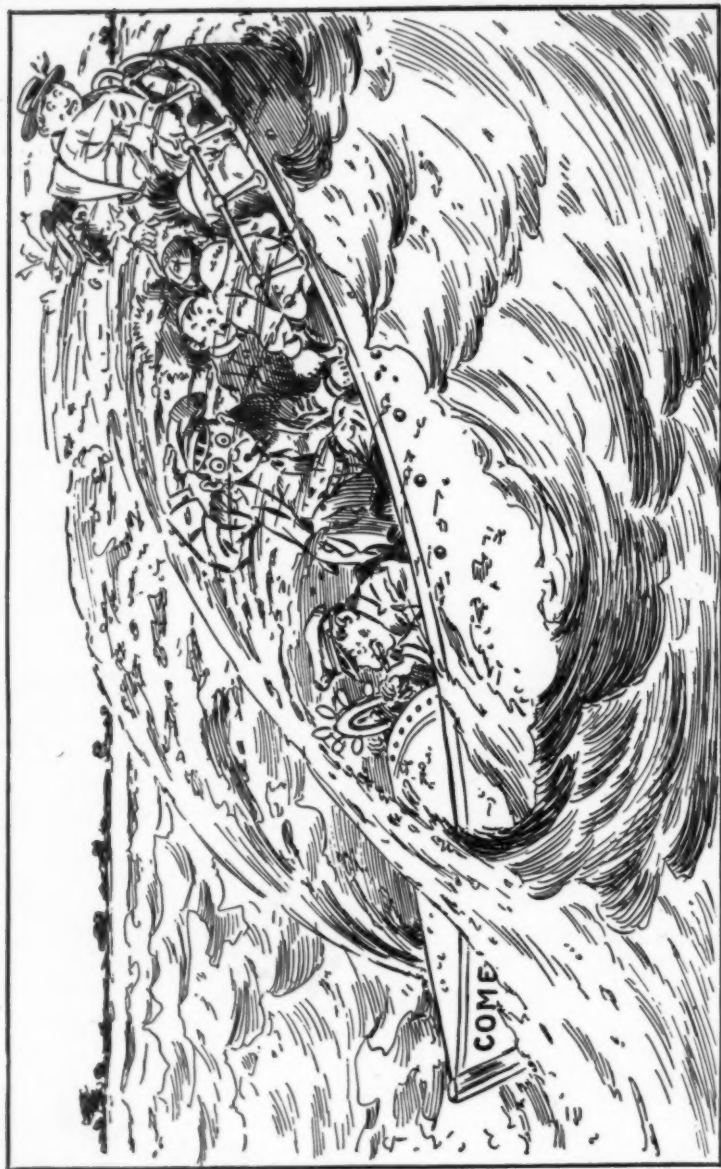
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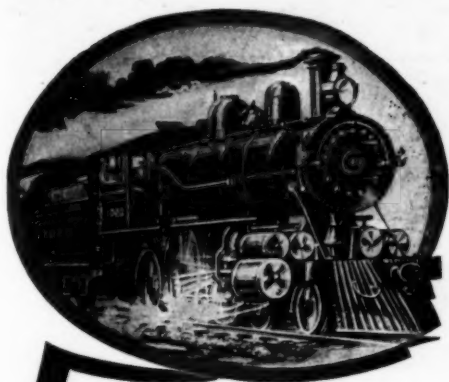


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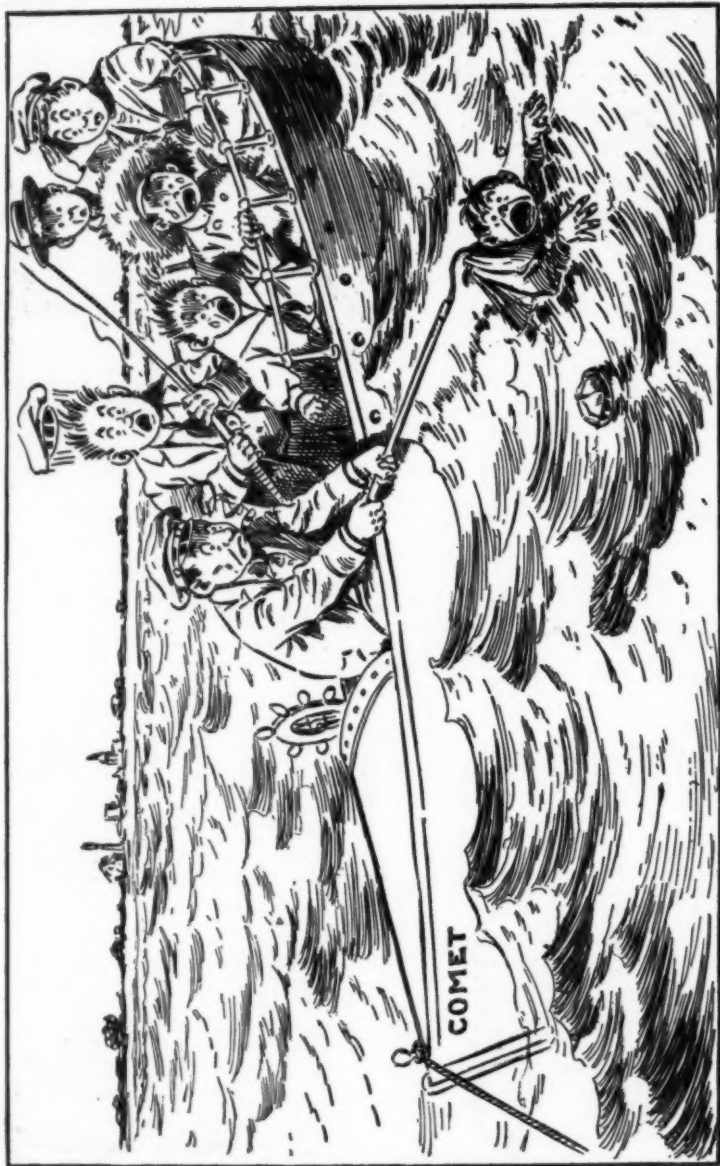
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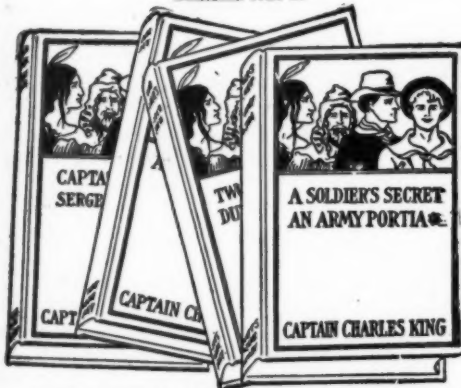
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